# The Development of a Teaching Practice Curriculum for Teacher Education in Zimbabwe

*by*

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# THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM FOR TEACHER EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE

## SUMMARY

The fundamental aim of undertaking the study was to develop a teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. In order to accomplish this, basic questions on curriculum development were first investigated. These were on curriculum intent, structure and content. In chapter two a conceptual framework for the proposed teaching practice curriculum was investigated. This involved an analysis of the influence of aims of education on curriculum theory and development, issues of curriculum foundations and models of curriculum development. The analysis culminated in the adoption of a cyclical model for the development of the proposed teaching practice curriculum. The cognitive framework of the study was further illuminated through the conceptualisation of the teaching practice curriculum, where philosophical foundations of teaching practice as well as its theoretical contexts were examined. Critical in this was the theory-practice relationship. In chapter four, the prevailing teaching practice situation in Zimbabwe was examined and views of lecturers and students on it analysed. This was accomplished in order to further identify flaws in the current approach to teaching practice which could be improved by means of the proposed teaching practice curriculum. The teaching practice curriculum being proposed was synthesised and developed in chapter five. This curriculum is founded on the philosophical foundations discussed in chapters two and three. It has theoretical components and is implemented in teachers' colleges and schools. It brings to the fore the importance of partnership between the practising schools and colleges as well as reflective teacher education. The development of the proposed teaching practice curriculum resulted in the following outcomes:

- An investigation into how theory and practice in teacher education could be integrated.
- Suggestions for improving the college-school relationship through the development of partnership in teacher education.
- The extrication of theory from practice.
- An emphasis on the importance of reflective practice and reflective teacher education.

In recommending the adoption and implementation of the curriculum the researcher identified a number of meaningful consequences:

- The improvement of teaching practice programmes in colleges.
- The development of expertise in the practice of education.
- The active involvement of experienced teachers in teacher education and training.
- The resurgence of research in the practical aspect of teacher education.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Wideen and Tisher (1990: 1) rightly observe that **education** occupies an important role in most nations. It is expected to provide the impetus for economic growth and also the opportunity for individuals to achieve full access to social and economic participation. In the African countries, each government was determined to change the colonial education for a system that was *African* and *relevant* for development (Salia-Bao 1987: 17). In Zimbabwe, since independence in 1980, government has placed great store on the part education can play in the **national transformation** of the Zimbabwean society. While in the 1980's the thrust was on **quantitative** educational development in the form of more schools and related infrastructure to absorb more students, in the 1990's there has been a shift towards qualitative educational development. In this regard Dr Peresu (1997: 2) states that the biggest challenge facing teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe today is how to improve the **quality** of teacher preparation.

According to Wideen and Tisher (1990: 1) we can assume that the **quality** of education children receive links directly to the **knowledge, intelligence** and **professional skills** of teachers. They go further to point out that if we want to give young people the best education possible, we must first provide the best education and training to those who will teach them. Booth, Furlong and Wilken (1990: ix) observe that the training of teachers has been an issue of major **debate** and **controversy** over the past decade, with much of the discussion centred on the **roles** of the training institution and the school in providing a *coherent, relevant* and *effective* **course**. Basically, the concern is with the teacher education **curriculum** which is the vehicle for training teachers in colleges and schools. In reviewing teacher education literature from a variety of countries, Wideen and Tisher (1990: 1) discerned what they termed "a rather *unhealthy* and *uneven* picture". In some cases teacher education was under attack, with critics pointing out that

poor students were being recruited, institutions that prepare teachers were separated from the knowledge base of education, teachers were being trained in an environment where survival concerns were dominant, and teacher education was underfunded and out of touch with schools for which the teachers were being prepared. A similar observation was made by Howey and Zimpher (1989: 1) when they conceded that assumptions about the **general quality** of teacher preparation programs, the faculty attached to them and students enrolled in them are at the root of the current debate about needed reform in teacher education.

Teacher education has responded and is responding to the criticisms levelled against it as well as to the pressures for change. Tomlinson (1995: 1) can therefore rightly affirm that in a number of countries at present initial teacher preparation is undergoing an important **transition** from **settings** and **systems** dominated by separate, often higher education institutions, to being situated more in schools themselves. Transforming teacher education in essence means transforming the teacher education curriculum. Turney (1977: 1) observed that the movement to improve the **quality** of teacher education in the sixties and seventies involved two notions. The first was the acknowledgement that preparing teachers involved more than a **training** in *techniques* and *procedures* and that adequate preparation was commensurate in both **quality** and **extent** to that required in other professions. Turney (1977: 1) concluded: "The general adoption of the term **'teacher education'** indicates the marked shift from the limited concept of training to that of **development** of individuals with *sensitivities, undertakings* and *skills* necessary for working with children (own emphasis). The second notion identified by Turney (1977: 1) was that **change** was central to all thinking about teacher education. Teacher education had to change in response to changes in the **nature** and **purposes** of schooling. Teacher education also had to promote change in schools through the new *attitudes, ideas* and *approaches* it introduced to teachers (own emphasis).

Various approaches to teacher training have been adopted in the evolution of teacher education. Wragg (1990: 24) identified two models of teacher education. Model A represents a professional view of teacher training based on the premise that teaching is a very demanding job and will be more so as we enter the twenty-first century. According to this notion, what is needed is a well trained teaching force, not only on entry, but throughout a teacher's professional career. Model B is based on the assumption that almost anyone can teach, and that the nineteenth century model

of the **apprentice teacher** is adequate. According to this notion of teacher education, all that teachers need when they are training, is to spend time alongside someone in a school and pick up a few tips. What is actually being scrutinized when labelling teacher preparation as **Model A** and **Model B** (Wragg (1990: 25) is the curriculum of the models. One of the fundamental questions which will always be asked of teacher education is *"What is the most appropriate curriculum for the education of an effective teacher ?"*

Valli (1992: xi) poses the following questions which also place the focus on the teacher education curriculum. She asks; *"What does being a good teacher mean ?* and *How does teacher education contribute to the development of good teachers ?"* Valli (1992: xi) observes that these questions are not always **central** to the design of **programmes** to prepare teachers. She argues that too often *images* of **good teachers** and *knowledge* about good teaching are left unarticulated, presumed to be part of a *shared* but *tacit* **understanding**. The result of all this according to Valli (1992: xi) is that one of the most fundamental aspects of teacher preparation, *the articulation of a good teacher* is not done. She concludes her argument by stating that:

> *"In place of a coherent conception of good teaching tradition, institutional forces, and external constraints often shape the teacher education curriculum, a curriculum which has become so standardized (almost reified) in its basic course requirements that* ***conflicting*** *purposes and unformulated assumptions have been obscured".*

The teacher education curriculum has two broad fundamental aspects to it; the **theory** and the **practice**. A teacher is basically trained to **practise** and his effectiveness is judged by the **quality** of the **practice**. The quality of the practice which can be discerned when the teacher is observed at work is further critically judged through the **products** of the practice, that is, the performance of the children the teacher teaches. There is therefore this perennial problem in teacher education of the **theory - practice relationship**. Teacher education has in the past been accused of divorcing theory from practice.

Turney (1977: 10) wrote in this regard, "A long standing problem, which has attracted considerable attention in recent years has been the **relationship** between the **theoretical** and **practical** aspects of teacher education. Teacher education has frequently been criticized for

exhibiting a dichotomy between **theory** and **practice**" (own emphasis). There has been therefore a lot of research on how best to relate theory and practice in teacher education (Turney 1977: 10 - 14; Tisher & Wideen 1990). This is in support of the assertion that there has to be an integration of theory and practice in teacher education in order to produce a well rounded and effective teacher.

Hirst (1990: 74 - 85) identifies two approaches to the theory - practice relationship. The first approach is what he terms the **traditional** approach. This approach sees the activities of teaching as developing *directly* through practice. This is **apprenticeship** and is reminiscent of the Wragg (1990: 25) Model B model of training. Hirst's (1990) second approach to the theory - practice relationship is the one that sees practice being based on **rationally developed theory** from fundamental and related disciplines. According to this notion, professional practice must stem from the relevant achievements of **philosophy, psychology, sociology** and other appropriate disciplines, being derived from these in a logically defensible manner. It is no coincidence that the foundation disciplines of the teacher education curriculum which are philosophy, sociology and psychology are the same foundations of general curriculum development and design. This is because over the years philosophical, sociological and psychological studies and research have illuminated human development and education.

Hirst (1990: 78) has identified the following different levels of **educational theory** within the **'rationalist'** view of the practice - theory relationship. First there is *academic research* in the foundation disciplines which can either be wide ranging in its concern of *fundamental beliefs* and *values* or more specific in relation to *educational ideas* and *practices*. The second level is a form of **practical theory** which, drawing on the academic research of the first level, formulates general *practical principles* for practices appropriate to the types of circumstances. Thirdly, there is the level of **application** of **'practical theory'** in which the individual teacher, using principles justified at the second level determines what to do in a given situation. Fourthly, there is the level at which the teacher settles to a *pattern* of **justifiable practice** that is not determined by any *direct* employment of principles.

Hirst (1990: 78) then derives the following demands on teacher education from the rational approach to the development of practical theory:

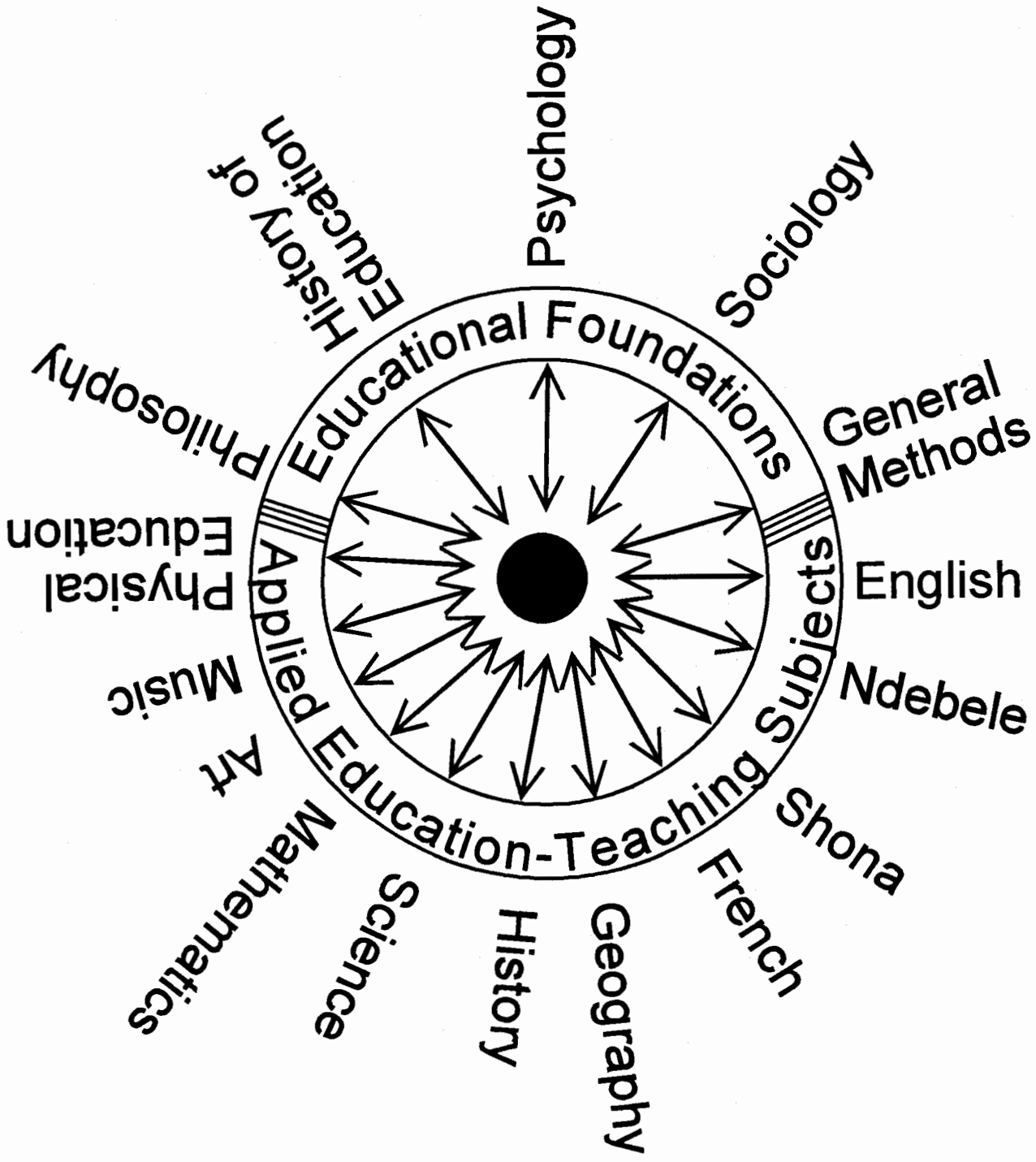
- First, it requires a mastery of the most up-to-date body of concepts, beliefs and practical principles relevant to the work for which the students are training.
- Second, the training has to develop in students a mastery of executive skills to bring about what 'theory' determines.
- Third, the students must understand the need to be always open to a new and more adequately researched 'theory' to which their practice should conform.

Hirst (1990) provides a philosophical exposition of the **theory - practice problem** within **the curriculum** of teacher education. It is the curriculum of teacher education which will determine the quality of the teacher education product when this curriculum is implemented by academically and professionally competent teacher educators. This study focuses on the **teacher education curriculum** in general and the **teaching practice curriculum** in particular. The basic assumption that is to be investigated is that the teaching practice curriculum is **the hub** of the wheel of the teacher education curriculum. This metaphor of the hub and the wheel sees the fundamental disciplines of philosophy, psychology, sociology as well as the teaching subjects and methodology originating from and also converging on the "hub" of the teacher education curriculum which is the teaching practice curriculum.

Figure 1.1 depicts this relationship of teaching practice to the other aspects of the teacher education curriculum.

**FIGURE 1.1**

# THE RELATIONSHIP OF TEACHING PRACTICE TO THE THEORETICAL COMPONENTS OF TEACHER EDUCATION



### 1.1.1 Teacher education in Zimbabwe since 1980

In Zimbabwe teacher education has been subjected to a series of major **structural** changes since just before the attainment of independence in 1980. These structural changes came about when the Zimbabwean government looked to teacher education to provide large numbers of teachers to staff the schools which had mushroomed all over the country. Soon after the attainment of independence in 1980 free primary education was introduced in Zimbabwe and access to secondary education for the majority of primary school leavers was made possible by automatic transition from primary to four years of secondary education. As a result there was a massive, unprecedented educational expansion at both primary and secondary school levels (Ndlovu: 1993: 2).

The tremendous expansion of primary and secondary education resulted in a serious shortage of teachers, hence the need for teacher education to find ways of increasing the output of teachers in the shortest possible time. The structural changes in teacher education were of two kinds. The length of the course was extended from **three** to **four** years and the **length** and **pattern** of teaching practice was radically changed (Ndlovu: 1993: 8). While before independence in 1980 teaching practice used to last for three to four weeks in the first and second years and eight weeks in the third and final year, soon after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 it was radically modified. The modification was implemented in two phases. First in 1982 a pattern termed the 5 - 7 - 9 scheme of teaching practice was introduced. In a three year teacher education programme extending for nine terms, students did a full term's teaching practice in the fifth, seventh and ninth terms. They were fully responsible for a class without the supervision of a class teacher.

In January 1983 the teaching practice pattern was further modified. The most radical stage in the teaching practice pattern had been reached. A one year in, one year out pattern of teaching practice was introduced. In a four year teacher education course, students were to spend the first year in college, the second on teaching practice in schools, the third year in college and the fourth year yet again on teaching practice (Ndlovu 1993: 8 - 9).

The structural changes in the course and in the teaching practice pattern were a result of a major teacher education innovation programme, introduced in 1980. This is ZINTEC, the Zimbabwe, Integrated Teacher Education Course, a distance education mode of teacher education. Zintec is four years (twelve terms) long. Its course structure is as follows:

- The first **two terms** are spent on residential college tuition.
- The next **eight terms** extending over the second and third years are spent on teaching practice in schools as well as distance teacher education.
- The last **two terms** are spent on final residential tuition and examinations at college.

Because of the success of the Zintec experience which Mugabe had termed 'a leap in the dark, or an experiment whose result and consequence we could not be absolutely certain about' (Zimfep 1987: 47), the structure of the conventional teachers' colleges was changed.

The **structural changes** in teacher education did not affect the content of the teacher education curriculum. The changes resulted mainly in a *rearrangement of the content* and the *timing of the covering of that content.* For instance it was stressed that colleges had in the first year of residential tuition, to teach those parts of the syllabi in the various subject areas which would equip the students with **survival skills** in their second year of teaching practice. By the same token, it was stressed that during the third year in college the coverage of the syllabi content in the various subjects had to take into account and make relevant use of the students' teaching practice experience during the second year.

The teaching practice curriculum also did not change. Only the **length and pattern of teaching practice** changed. However the individual practice of students in classes without the support of a class-teacher was a very radical move which should have necessitated some evaluation of the teaching practice curriculum. It is this researcher's contention that there was need to critically evaluate the teaching practice curriculum in the light of this major departure from the norm in order to make it responsive to the students' needs in the isolated classroom environment they were practising under. Yet another change has recently been introduced in the approach to teaching practice. Since 1996 students are no longer responsible for classes but are **attached** to qualified teachers. All these changes have resulted from factors outside teacher education

mainly government policy decisions necessitating a review of the teaching practice curriculum, hence this study.

## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

### 1.2.1 Background to the problem

The problem being investigated in this study originates from an earlier study: **"A Critical Analysis of the Teaching Practice Model in Zimbabwean Colleges of Education"**. The aim of the abovementioned study was to critically examine the teaching practice model in Zimbabwean colleges of teacher education in order to indicate both strengths and weaknesses and to suggest ways of improving the model (Ndlovu 1993: ii). One of the major recommendations made was that a teaching practice curriculum be developed:

> *"The teaching practice courses or units that are taught in the various main subjects and in the education department are not well co-ordinated within themselves, across subjects and with theory of education. This results in duplication, omission and conflicting signals to students. A teaching practice curriculum which clearly indicates what units of the programme are covered in the main subject methodology courses, what units are covered in the theory of education general methodology courses and what units are covered in the teaching practice department would be the answer"*
>
> (Ndlovu 1993: 232)

This study aims at accomplishing the task of developing the teaching practice curriculum for teacher education in Zimbabwean colleges of teacher education. It is assumed that doing this will in turn accomplish the other major recommendations of the earlier study which include:

- The establishment of a fully fledged teaching practice department, with a full complement of lecturers whose main functions would be mainly didactic rather than administrative (Ndlovu 1993: 231 - 323).
- The development and refinement of teaching practice supervision procedures (Ndlovu 1993: 234 - 242).
- The development and refinement of teaching practice assessment procedures (Ndlovu 1993: 243 - 245).

## 1.2.2 Formulation of the problem

In Zimbabwe teaching practice within teachers' colleges is taken as an *activity* or a *programme* rather than a subject with a **theoretical** content and a **practical** component that can be studied and practised. This approach to teaching practice impedes any **qualitative** developments that should accrue for both lecturers and students. Teaching practice is a major component of the overall teacher education curriculum in Zimbabwe. It is a basic requirement that students pass the teaching practice component of the course if they are to be certificated. Teacher education colleges in Zimbabwe individually draw up their teaching practice programmes. There is however some interaction amongst colleges when it comes to the final assessment of teaching practice in that some lecturers become external assessors in sister colleges, together with members of the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Zimbabwe. A basic common teaching practice curriculum for all colleges does not exist at the moment. This in a way is acceptable in that there is a need for some autonomy in curriculum determination among colleges. As Renshaw (1971: 53) rightly states; "Each institution within tertiary education needs to be viewed as an entity with its own unique function and educational **autonomy** within a **unitary national system**" (own emphasis). However, teaching practice curricula within teaching practice departments are needed in teacher education colleges if this important component of teacher education is to be effectively taught and practised.

The ***fundamental problem*** which this study addresses is:

* ***WHAT WOULD AN IDEAL TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM FOR ZIMBABWEAN COLLEGES OF TEACHER EDUCATION BE ?***

From this *basic question*, the following subquestions logically develop:

- What would the aims and objectives of this curriculum be?
- What would the structure of the curriculum be?
- What would the theoretical and practical content of the curriculum be?
- What would the assessment and evaluation procedures of the curriculum be?

The curriculum that is developed in this study is referred to as "an ideal" curriculum in that it necessarily will not be the curriculum adopted wholesale by the colleges of teacher education. Rather it would offer the **basic features** of a teaching practice curriculum that could be used by different colleges as a guide in the formulation of their unique curricula. Uniformity is not what is being sought here, but an example to be emulated.

## 1.3 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

### 1.3.1 Teaching practice

The concept of **teaching practice** has had wide and varying interpretations over the years. Stones and Morris (1972) and Turney (1977) discussed the various interpretations of the concept in the seventies. Various terms have been used to denote teaching practice. The most common of these are practicum, field experience, students teaching, professional experience and teaching rounds (Turney *et al* 1985: 1 - 2). According to Duminy *et al* (1992: 4) **teaching practice** is one of various terms that is used to refer to that part of students' professional training which is **directly** and **practically** concerned with their learning to do their jobs as teachers (own emphasis). They also cite *equivalent* terms, *practice teaching*, *student teaching*, *school experience* and *practicum* (Duminy *et al* 1992: 4).

In this study, **teaching practice** is taken to cover **all** the practical elements within subjects taught in colleges of teacher education as well as **all** the preparatory programmes for school practice like peer teaching and micro-teaching as well as the fully fledged practice in the schools. All these elements of teaching practice are part of the envisaged **teaching practice curriculum**. The concept of teaching practice is therefore wide and all embracing, hence the need for a teaching practice curriculum to didactically structure the content to be covered.

## 1.3.2 Education

The concept of curriculum is best explained within the broad concept of **education** because the curriculum exposes the content and context of education. Describing **education** as a concept that defies *precise* definition, Zais (1976: 317) suggests that education is probably most described as the process of *actualizing* human potentials. According to Lodge (Schofield 1982: 32) education is equivalent to **experience**, the experience of a living organism with its environment. This is a wider definition of education. Lodge's narrower definition of education is that while experience or nature is still the teacher, in the specific social institution known as **"schooling"**, it is guided by the teacher (Schofield 1972: 32) (own emphasis).

Peters (1970: 9) gave three criteria that have to be satisfied for one to be described as educated. Schofield (1972: 36) took these three criteria which have to be satisfied by an "educated" person (Peters 1970: 9) and transformed them to descriptors of education thus:

- Education implies the **transmission** of what is **worthwhile** to those who become committed to it.
- Education must involve **knowledge** and **understanding** of some sort of **"cognitive perspective"** which is not inert.
- Education at least rules out some procedures of transmission on the grounds that they lack wittingness and **voluntariness** on the part of the learner.

## 1.3.3 Curriculum

The concept of **curriculum** is in itself **broad** and **comprehensive** and because of this lends itself to different and varied interpretations (Chalufu 1996: 95). Chalufu (1996: 95) points out that while traditionally the meaning of **curriculum** was limited to a brief list of educational objectives and content to be taught at school, in more recent years the *meaning* or *interpretation* of curriculum has been broadened to include *all the experiences students have in a particular educational institution.*

Through the exposition of the curriculum, the **aims, content** and **context** of education are illuminated. According to Taba (1962: 10): A curriculum usually contains a statement of **aims** and of *specific* **objectives**, indicates some *selection* and *organisation* of **content**, implies or manifests certain patterns of **learning** and **teaching** and includes a programme of **evaluation** of outcomes. Kelly (1977: 3) acknowledges that the term curriculum is used with several meanings and a number of different definitions of it have been offered. According to Print (1989: 3) educators define curriculum in different ways, in part because they bring to the task different **perceptions** of what curriculum should be. In this regard Zais (1975: 1) rightly points out that definitions of the word curriculum do not solve curricula problems; but they do suggest **perspectives** from which to view them.

The word "curriculum" is derived from a Latin root meaning "race course" (Print 1989: 3; Salia-Bao 1989: 3; Fraser, Loubser & Van Rooy 1992: 81). Fraser *et al* (1992: 81) explain:

> *The Latin origins of the word 'curriculum' lie in the word* ***currere*** *which means to run. Thus 'curriculum' implies a relatively fixed track or terrain (learning content) which must be covered (mastered) by the participant (learner) in order to reach the winning post (learning result).*

Print (1989: 2) points out that the term "curriculum" is often confused with "syllabus". According to Print (1989: 2) a syllabus is a list of content areas to be assessed which is sometimes extended to include objectives and learning activities. A syllabus is a sub-section of curriculum and as such is subsumed within the broader concept.

The following are some of the well known definitions of the concept of curriculum quoted by Print (1989: 3 - 4):

- Ralph Tyler (1949) defines curriculum as "*All of the learning* of students which is *planned* by and *directed* by the school to attain its educational goals" (own emphasis).
- D K Wheeler (1967) states "By 'curriculum' we mean the *planned experiences* offered to the learner under the *guidance* of the school" (own emphasis).

- Skilbeck (1984) says "'Curriculum' will be used to refer to the *learning experiences* of students, in so far as they are expressed or anticipated in *goals* and *objectives, plans* and designs for learning and the *implementation* of these plans and designs in schools" (own emphasis).

Print (1989: 4) then concludes by offering the following definition of curriculum:

> *"..... curriculum is defined as all the planned learning opportunities offered to learners by the educational institution and the experiences learners encounter when the curriculum is implemented. This includes those activities that educators have devised for learners which are represented in the form of a written document".*

Print (1989: 4) identifies the following *elements* of a curriculum:

- planned learning activities
- offered within an educational institution or program
- represented as a document
- and includes experiences resulting from implementing that document.

Zais (1976: 7 - 10) identified the following diverse *definitions* of the concept of curriculum:

- curriculum as a *programme* of studies
- curriculum as *course content*
- curriculum as *planned learning experiences*
- curriculum as *experiences* had under the auspices of the school
- curriculum as *intended learning outcomes*
- curriculum as a *written plan for instruction.*

Fraser *et al* gave this *definition* of the concept of curriculum:

> *"The curriculum is the interrelated totality of aims, learning content, evaluation procedures and teaching-learning activities, opportunities and experiences which guide and implement the didactic activities in a planned and justified manner".*

It will have been apparent that some definitions of the concept of curriculum are very narrow and some are very broad and inclusive. Both Print (1989: 4) and Fraser *et al* (1992: 82) worked out their definitions aiming at being embracing, which is lacking in some of the definitions of the term. A curriculum has aims, learning content, teaching-learning activities and evaluation

procedures. A curriculum is represented as a document and as Print (1989: 4) puts it: "When a curriculum document is implemented in an institution (kindergarten, school, college, university and so forth), interaction takes place between the **document, learners** and **instructors** such that modification occurs and a 'curriculum' emerges.

There are a number of concepts that describe some aspects of the curriculum and the main concepts that are pertinent to this study are discussed below.

### *1.3.3.1 Hidden curriculum*

It is pertinent at this stage to refer to the concept of "hidden curriculum". According to Seddon ( *in* Print 1989: 5) "the hidden curriculum refers to the outcomes of education and / or the processes leading to those outcomes which are *not explicitly intended by the educators.* These outcomes are generally not explicitly intended because they are stated by teachers in their oral or written lists of objectives, nor are they included in educational statements of intent such as syllabuses, school policy documents or curriculum projects". To Chalufu (1996: 96) the hidden curriculum relates to a *wide variety* of *planned* as well as *unplanned* experiences which pupils and teachers have at schools *but* which are *not stipulated* in *specific syllabuses* (own emphasis).

Chalufu (1996: 96 - 97) identifies *three categories* of the hidden curriculum:

- The *hidden micro-curriculum* which manifests itself in each lesson mostly through the relationships and interactions of the teacher and each pupil as well as interaction between pupils themselves.

- The *hidden meso-curriculum* which refers to experiences which pupils and teachers undergo within a particular school and its immediate environment *but* outside individual lessons. The most common *meso-realities* which affect the teaching-learning dynamics in a school are:

    - the teachers' personalities and relationships with another;
    - the pupils' personalities and relationships across class barriers;
    - the influence of parents and community leaders;
    - the nature of the surrounding communities; and
    - extra-curricular activities.

- The hidden macro-curriculum manifests itself at a *national* level through predominant national forces. The government is the major factor here as its economic control of the education system is to achieve certain political goals.

The hidden curriculum is usually viewed as negative or detrimental to the learner, but this is not always the case. As Print (1989: 6) states, "The hidden curriculum may be described as positive or negative, although it depends to some degree on one's point of view. The essential feature of *hiddenness* derives from the understanding that the messages passed on to students are essentially *'hidden'* from them, at least in the sense that they have not been stated explicitly" (own emphasis). Print (1989: 6) points out that other researchers suggest that the hidden curriculum may also be hidden to teachers as well as students, at least at a conscious level.

According to Hewitson (1982) in schools, the hidden curriculum is acquired by students at these three levels:

- the school system as part of society,
- the operation of the school,
- and the functioning of the classroom (Print 1989: 7).

Hewitson (1982) cited by Print (1989: 7) gave the following features of the hidden curriculum:

- Learning the hidden curriculum is not the result of *deliberate* efforts on the part of learners, but is mainly *inferred* on their part. Such learning accrues over time as a seemingly inevitable consequence of continued exposure to delimited perceptions of reality. In this regard, it is something *'done to'* learners not something *done with* them or with their conscious assent.

- What is perceived or inferred by learners comes to be taken as *the natural order of things* i.e. their social reality appears to have been ordained by nature rather than structured by man.

- At the social level, the cause of the hidden curriculum lies in the way the school system is *structured* and *resourced* to achieve the functions for which it is established and maintained. Broadly speaking these functions have to do with preparing learners for future roles in society.

- At the school and classroom level the hidden curriculum is learnt through *structures* and *rules* as well as through *attitudes* and *values* espoused by school staff, school textbooks, school syllabuses and the student peer group.

What Hewitson (Print 1989: 6 - 6) has said about the hidden curriculum within the school system can be extrapolated to the teacher education system. It seems logical to suggest that within teacher education colleges the hidden curriculum is acquired by students through:

- the teacher education system as part of society,
- the operation of the teacher education college, and
- the functioning of the lecture room.

The essential features of the hidden curriculum as identified by Hewitson (Print 1989: 7) are also applicable to the teacher education situation.

The main feature of the process of learning the hidden curriculum is the *unconsciousness* or *unawareness* of the learning process. According to Print (1989: 7) students constantly receive information about which they are largely unaware from people who are often unaware of this transmission. Seddon (1983: 2) cited by Print (1989: 7) makes the following observation about the **content** of the hidden curriculum:

> *"There seems to be general agreement that the hidden curriculum involves the learnings of **attitudes, norms, beliefs, values** and **assumptions** often expressed as **rules, rituals** and **regulations**"* (own emphasis).

A study of the teaching practice curriculum within the overall teacher education curriculum necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the concept of *curriculum* and the subsequent concept of the *hidden curriculum*. The concept of curriculum adopted for this study is as explicated by Print (1989: 4) and Fraser *et al* (1992: 82) i.e. the all embracing definition. Another definition which encompasses the context in which the term curriculum is used in this study is that of Hass (1987: 5) which states that the curriculum comprises **all** the experiences that learners have in a programme of education whose purpose is to achieve *broad goals* and *related specific objectives*, which is planned in terms of a framework of *theory* and *research* or *past* and *present* professional practice (own emphasis). Within this study such questions will be investigated:

- What are the broad goals of teacher education in Zimbabwe ?
- What are the related specific objectives of teaching practice in Zimbabwe ?

- What are the theoretical and research foundations as well as past and present professional practice on which the teaching practice curriculum is based ?

The broad aim of a teaching practice curriculum is, according to Tibble (1971: 65), to develop, through training and practical experience, the technical skills necessary for the achievement of *professional competence* in teaching. The teaching practice curriculum stresses

- the acquisition of a range of skills focused on teaching methods, appropriate learning experiences and motivation in the classroom, management and organisational expertise, evaluation procedures and record keeping;
- the development of the student's critical skills, judgement and powers of reflection, thus giving him the ability to modify his performances in the light of growing experience.

The issue of the hidden curriculum in teacher education will also be investigated in this study, especially those aspects of it that permeate and influence teaching practice.

### *1.3.3.2 Curriculum design*

To design is to arrive at a complete plan, *to guide* action as well as *to achieve* set goals and objectives. According to Jacobs & Gawe (1996: 99) curriculum design is concerned with the *arrangement* of major components of the curriculum and follows logical steps which guide the development of the curriculum. Zais (1976: 1) observes that often the term curriculum organisation is used to indicate curriculum design. Curriculum design results from organising curriculum elements in particular ways. An essential feature of any curriculum is the conceptualisation and organisation of its elements which are essential building blocks of any curriculum (Print 1989: 15).

The curriculum *elements* or *components* that have been identified are:

- situation analysis
- aims, goals and objectives
- subject matter or learning content
- teaching and learning activities
- evaluation procedures (Print 1985: 15; Jacobs & Gawe 1996: 99).

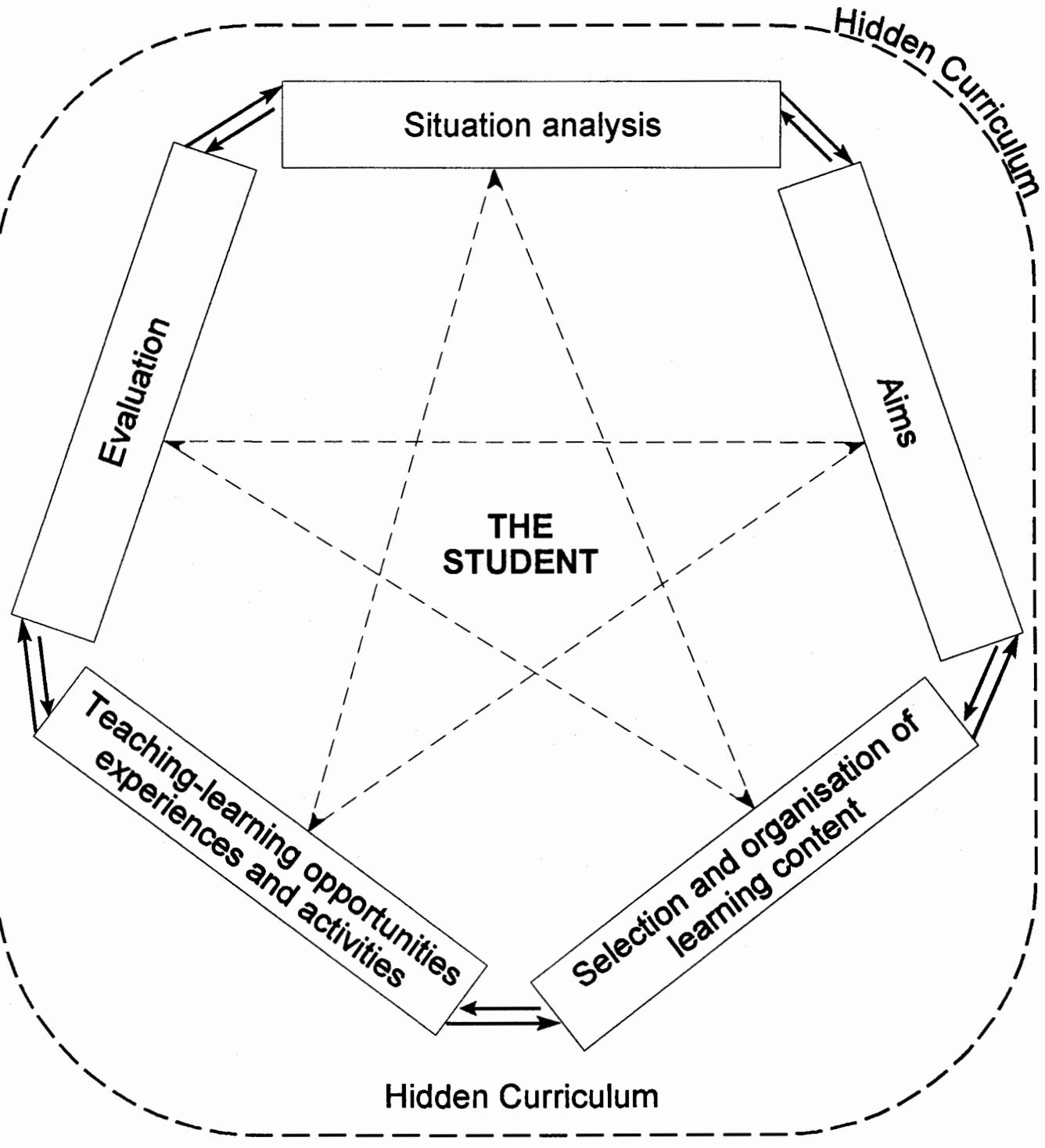
Curriculum design also refers to the **interrelationship** between all curriculum elements. It is concerned with **planning** and **organising** the *ultimate nature* of the entire curriculum (Print 1989: 15) . The interaction of the curriculum elements takes place in a cyclical nature as these elements form a logical sequence (Chalufu 1996: 99). While the cyclical nature of the curriculum elements or components follows a logical sequence, in real life sometimes the curriculum cycle functions in a much more **complex** and **unpredictable** fashion (Chalufu 1996: 100). Hence curriculum design is a **dynamic** process.

Figure 1.2 on page 20 has been developed by merging the Fraser *et al* (1992: 92) figure depicting the **interrelationships** of elements or components of the curriculum with Chalufu's (1996: 100) figure depicting the curriculum cycle.

**FIGURE 1.2**

# THE INTERRELATIONSHIP OF THE ELEMENTS OF THE CURRICULUM WITHIN THE CURRICULUM CYCLE

***Developed from Fraser et al 1992:92; Chalufu 1996:100***



Fraser *et al* (1992: 91) point out that there is a mutual and interdependent relationship between the components of the curriculum. Each component is constantly influenced by the other components, so that no reflection on the curriculum can one-sidedly emphasise any particular component. Fraser *et al* (1992: 92) then conclude:

> *"The most important implication of the interrelationship between the components of the curriculum is that curriculum development cannot be directed at a single component of the curriculum but all the components of the curriculum must be considered".*

Curriculum design therefore plays a fundamental role in the planning and development of curriculum.

### *1.3.3.3 The concept of curriculum development*

According to Print (1989: 15) design and development in curriculum are tandem terms. Print (1989: 15) states:

> *"Once a curriculum has been designed, it may then be developed, probably to become a* ***written document*** *and finally to be* ***implemented*** *and* ***evaluated"*** (own emphasis).

Print (1989: 15) contends that the following broad definition of curriculum development has gained consensus within the literature on the curriculum. The definition is that curriculum development is the process of *planning, implementing* and *evaluating* learning opportunities intended to produce desired changes in learners. Print (1989: 15) goes further to observe:

> *"Therefore curriculum developers take their curriculum design, construct a document from it,* ***implement*** *or* ***monitor*** *the implementation of that document and finally appraise the effectiveness of the entire curriculum"* (own emphasis).

Fraser *et al* (1992: 92) give a similar definition of curriculum development to that of Print. They state:

> *"Curriculum development can be described as all the processes necessary* ***to plan, design, implement*** *and* ***evaluate*** *a functional curriculum"* (own emphasis).

Fraser *et al* (1992: 92) go further to explain:

> *"Thus curriculum development is at issue when* ***the effectiveness*** *of an existing curriculum is evaluated and, as a result, it is* ***replanned, amended*** *and/or* ***innovated.*** *Curriculum development is also relevant when a* ***new,*** *or* ***existing curriculum,*** *is implemented on a trial basis and is* ***evaluated*** *and* ***modified*** *before it is implemented in its 'final' form".*

They conclude:

> *"Curriculum development is a* ***continuous, cyclical process*** *which can never be considered to be complete"* (own emphasis).

These definitions and further elucidations of the concept of curriculum development by Print (1989) and Fraser *et al* (1992) succinctly give the conceptual context within which the teaching practice curriculum for teacher education in Zimbabwe will be developed. While Print (1989) and Fraser *et al* (1992) give a global picture of the concept, and whereas Fraser *et al* (1992) point out that curriculum development is *continuous* and can never be considered complete, the development of the teaching practice curriculum in this study will be the *initial* step in this continuous process, concentrating on the *writing* of the *curriculum document.* The *implementation* and the *evaluation* of this proposed teaching practice curriculum will depend on whether the colleges of teacher education adopt this curriculum document.

### 1.3.4 Teacher education

In this study, the development of a teaching practice curriculum is done within the broad context of teacher education. The term *teacher education* has evolved through history with the

development of teacher preparation. This concept evolved from the early rudimentary preparation of teachers aptly referred to as *teacher training*. In this regard, Turney (1977: 1) contends that the evolution from *teacher training* to *teacher education* came about when it was recognized that preparing teachers involves very much more than a *'training'* in techniques and procedures and that adequate preparation is commensurate with both the quality and the extent to which it is required for other professions. Turney (1977: 1) concludes:

> *"The general adoption of the term **'teacher education'** indicates the marked shift from the **limited** concept of **training** to that of the development of individuals with sensitivities, understandings and skills necessary for working creatively with children"* (own emphasis).

In arguing for the **education** rather than the **training** of teachers Elvin in Hilliard (1971: 17) states:

> *"There are two traditional ideas about the preparation of a teacher. One is that he should be **educated** but need not be trained. The other is that he should be **trained** but need not be **educated**" (own emphasis).*

Teacher education is the **education** of those who have chosen the teaching profession. This education takes place in colleges of education. According to Renshaw (*in* Tibble 1971: 53) the college of education has a unique character resulting from its dual function in the **education** and **training** of students for the sole profession of teaching (own emphasis). Writing on the same theme Hilliard (1971: 33) states:

> *"The attitude to teachers and their work which colours all that follows is the exact opposite to that which is reflected in Shaw's cynical dictum: **'Those who can, do; those who cannot, teach.'** On the contrary it stems from the belief that teaching is a **profession** and that **teacher education** is education for a profession"* (own emphasis).

Hilliard's (1971: 34) rationale for depicting a teacher as a *professional* was that the teacher uses **knowledge** to *organise, encourage* and *assist* certain generally approved kinds of **learning** through a system of **formal education** namely schools, colleges, universities and extra-mural courses.

## 1.4 METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

This study focuses on the ***teaching practice curriculum*** within the ***teacher education programme***. According to Katz and Raths (1990: 241) a *teacher education programme* is defined as a set of phenomena deliberately intended to help candidates acquire the knowledge, skills, dispositions and norms of the occupation of teaching. They go further to point out that the phenomena constituting teacher education programmes are numerous and varied, including the following: lectures, classes, seminars, field trips, practice of various kinds, modules on specific topics, micro-teaching, observation in schools and elsewhere, tutoring of individual children, peer tutoring, examinations, screening procedures, social events, meetings of students, educational associations and so forth. While the above refers to *planned* phenomena of the teacher education programme, Katz and Raths rightly concede that *unplanned* or incidental factors impinge upon them that may contribute substantially to the *nature* and *consequence* of the candidates' experience. The planned phenomena of the teaching practice programme can be identified within the *planned* overall teacher education **curriculum** (see par. 1.3.3) while the *unplanned* or *incidental* factors are reminiscent of the **hidden curriculum** (see par 1.3.3.1).

It is pertinent at this stage to relate this concept of **teacher education programme** to **teacher education curriculum** (see 1.3.3). The concept of teacher education programme as defined by Katz and Raths (1990: 241) is interchangeable with the one of teacher education curriculum. Zais (1976: 35 - 39) did include among the *diverse* definitions of the concept of curriculum, that curriculum is a **programme of study**. However, close examination reveals that the concept of programme is much *wider than curriculum*. The programme seems to be made up of a number of curricula and curricula content and procedures. Within the context of this study this is the relationship accorded the two concepts; the teacher education programme is the sum of **all** the various curricula that the college has developed to educate and train the student teacher.

Whereas the study is aimed at developing a teaching practice **curriculum** for colleges of education in Zimbabwe, this is done within the broader context of the developmental trends of teacher education programmes. Hence the study involves an investigation of teacher education programmes and teaching practice curricula as a basis for the development of a teacher education curriculum for Zimbabwean colleges of education.

### 1.4.1 Literature study

The literature study in this thesis involves consulting relevant published books, published and unpublished dissertations, theses and research articles in periodical journals. It is from this literature study that:

- a conceptual framework for curriculum development will be devised (chapter two); and
- the conceptualisation of the teaching practice curriculum will be discussed (chapter three).

Relevant documents from teachers' colleges, the university of Zimbabwe and the Ministry of Higher Education are also studied. It is from this document analysis that the Zimbabwean teacher education curriculum is investigated (see chapter four). Walker (1989: 64) had this to say about document analysis:

> *"Document analysis is superior in finding out retrospective information about a program, and may be the only way that certain information is available".*

Document analysis also reveals the current or prevailing situation about a programme.

### 1.4.2 Quantitative data collection

Questionnaire surveys are used to gather opinions and attitudes of lecturers and students on the teaching practice curriculum and related issues (see chapter four). The questionnaire and the structured interview fall under the quantitative data collection method of scientific research. According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1989: 24):

> *"Quantitative data can be measured more easily, patterns can be established more clearly, and therefore any patterns which are discovered and generalizations made will be accurate since they are located within a large body of materials".*

It is however pertinent to point out here that the questionnaire format adopted for this study is aimed at soliciting *qualitative* rather than *quantitative* data.

### 1.4.3 Multiple methods approach

The method of investigation adopted in this thesis is a combination of methods and techniques. The basic approach is the situational - interpretive inquiry orientation. Wideen and Tisher (1990: 7) explain:

> *"Within this approach meaningful descriptions and interpretations of events and phenomena become the focus. Methodologies within this orientation stress descriptive data collection using observation, interviewing, transcript analysis and direct participation".*

In support of a multiple methods approach to research Walker (1989: 79) states: "Indeed in many projects the most significant findings have emerged from points at which different methods have *complemented* each other" (own emphasis). This principle of using different methods of investigation and interrelating them is termed a *triad* by Faulkner (Walker 1989: 80) who explains it as follows:

> *"A triad of data collection involves carrying out a sequential, step-by-step testing and discovery of ideas, hunches, hypotheses. The imagery is one of a loosely linked interdependent set of strategies".*

## 1.5 THE STUDY PROGRAMME

In *chapter two* a conceptual framework for curriculum development is devised.
The following issues are investigated:

- The influence of aims of education on curriculum theory
- Conceptualising curriculum phenomena
- The foundations of curriculum
- Models of curriculum development
- Strategies of curriculum development

- Curriculum evaluation.

It is this conceptual framework of curriculum development that lays the foundation and determines the parameters to be pursued in the development of the teaching practice curriculum for colleges of education in Zimbabwe. In *chapter three* a conceptualization of the teaching practice curriculum is explored. Within this context the following are investigated:

- The place of teaching practice in teacher education
- Theoretical contexts of the teaching practice curriculum.

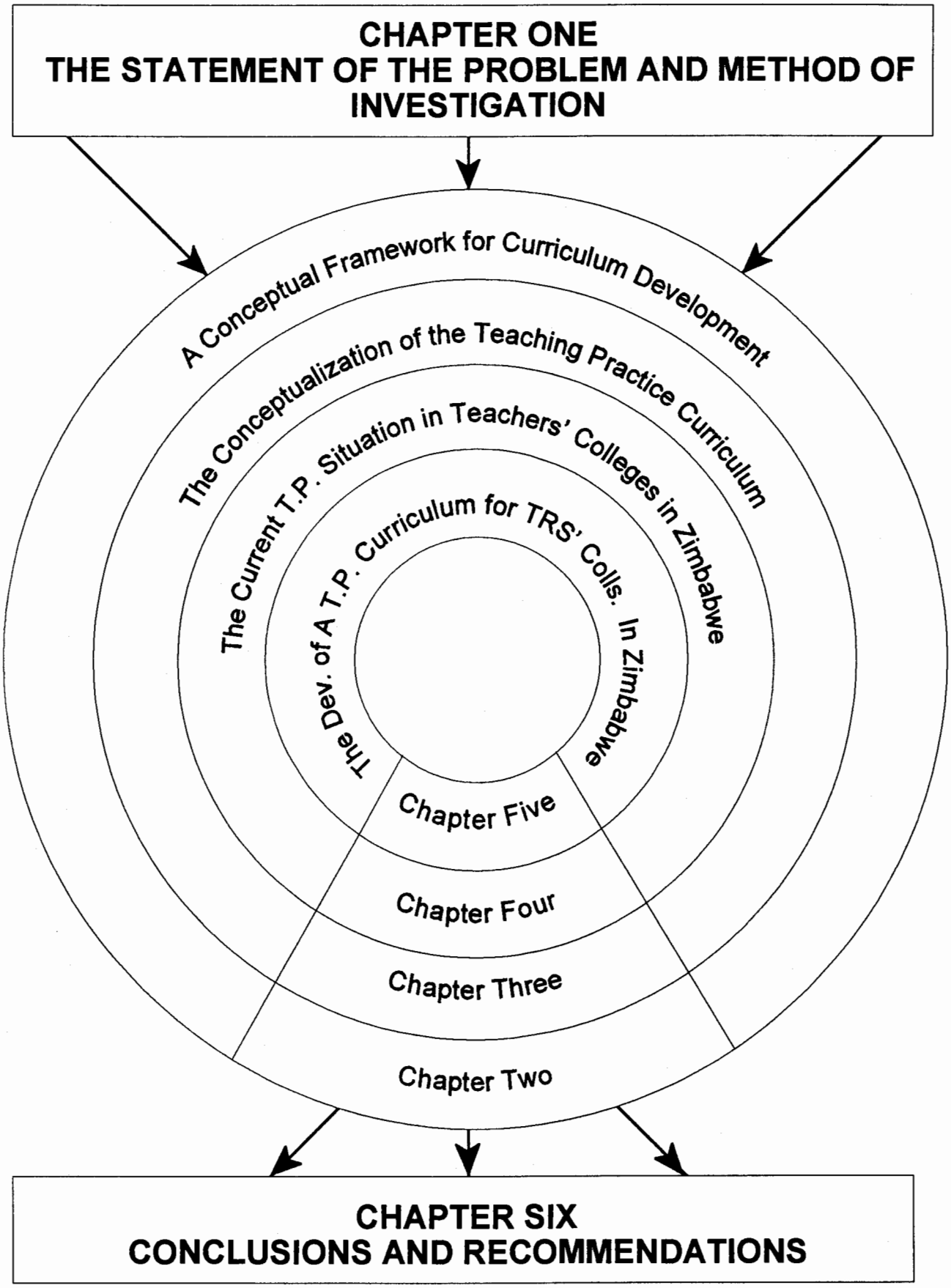
This conceptualization of the teaching practice curriculum leads to the proposal of a teaching practice model. In *chapter four* the focus shifts to an examination of the current teaching practice situation in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. This is achieved through documentary study as well as through a questionnaire survey. In *chapter five* the teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe that is being proposed is developed. It is in this chapter that the fundamental research problem and its subquestions are answered (see paragraph 1.2.2). The rationale, aims and objectives, structure, content, methodology and evaluation procedures for the proposed curriculum evolve from the study and analysis that take place in chapters two to four.

The structure of the whole thesis can be viewed as *concentric* (see fig. 1.3) starting from a **broad, general perspective of curriculum theory**, narrowing down to a **conceptualization of the teaching practice curriculum**, then focussing on the **current teaching practice situation in Zimbabwe**, which logically leads to the **development of the proposed teaching practice curriculum** for Zimbabwean Teachers' Colleges.

In the last chapter (*chapter six*) general conclusions are drawn and **recommendations** on the implementation of the proposed curriculum are made.

FIGURE 1.3

# THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS



# CHAPTER TWO

# A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

# CHAPTER TWO

## A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to have a cognitive framework for the development of a teaching practice curriculum for colleges of education in Zimbabwe, it is necessary to devise a **conceptual framework** for curriculum development which will be used as a theoretical framework on which to base the development of the teaching practice curriculum envisaged in this study. This conceptual framework will focus on the following:

- the influence of aims of education on curriculum theory,
- conceptualising the curriculum phenomena,
- curriculum foundations,
- models of curriculum development, and
- an adoption of a curriculum model for this study.

The conceptual framework is built from a review of some classical writers on curriculum theory and design like Taba (1962) and Wheeler (1967) as well as later writers like Print (1989), Brady (1990) Fraser et al (1992) and McNeil (1996). From the onset, it is important to realise that a curriculum is a **manipulative strategy** (Print 1989: 9) (own emphasis). Because of this, what students learn in schools and colleges is the result of what certain people want them to learn. This issue will be discussed further when the influence of the aims of education on curriculum development as well as curriculum foundations are discussed. It is also pertinent to be aware that there are some pressures exerted on curriculum planners. As Lawton in Kelly (1978: 10) suggests, curriculum must take full account of the social situation, the pressures and the needs of the society of which the school is a part. It is this kind of consideration Lawton pointed out, that led to demands for **relevance** in the curriculum. Kelly (1978: 11) also acknowledges that curriculum development is subject to many social pressures. These social pressures are often **subtle** and while it is not easy to justify what they may lead to, their presence and influence must

be recognised and acknowledged. Two main social pressures on curriculum development are those that derive from **economic sources** and **ideological** pressures (Kelly 1978: 12 - 13) (own emphasis). Economic pressures on curriculum development derive from the premise that the education system has an *economic function*. Education has been seen in part as a **national investment** from which society is entitled some return. As Kelly (1978: 12) puts it:

> *"For the most part, that return will take the form of the **output** of a sufficient number of young people who have acquired the **knowledge** and **skills** that society needs to maintain and extend its development"*

In the post-independent Zimbabwe, education has been used as a vehicle of **political, economic** and **social** transformation. Mutumbuka (1984: 5) pointed out that Zimbabwe needed rapid industrialization and that this was only possible if large numbers of **high** and **middle** level persons with a strong bias towards **industrial skills** were produced. In a similar vein, Chivore (1990: 2) noted that given that **critical** as well as **strategic** manpower constraints existed in the **middle** and **higher** level skills, the secondary education sector is a vital instrument not only for its *direct* and *immediate* output to the work economy but also as a supplier to the post secondary levels of education.

Ideologies are **value systems** competing for **power** within society (own emphasis) (Kelly 1978: 13). The ideological pressures on curriculum development result from **dominant social groups** that influence government policy. In Zimbabwe the ideology of the incoming majority government in 1980 was socialist and there was overt government pressure for curriculum change. Culverwell (1984: 8) stated; "The colonial idea that practical and technical subjects are for the less able, whilst a purely academic education is the reward for the more able must be abandoned once and for all". Mutumbuka (1984: 5), the first Minister of Education after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980 put it more dramatically when he said, "It is absolutely a matter of life and death that those skills needed for the development of Zimbabwe become part and parcel of the school curriculum". Government was advocating for **education with production,** a socialist approach to education, that according to Mutumbuka (1984: 5) views the only socialist education as polytechnic education which combines both technical skills and academic skills to develop a worker intellectual. Government put social pressure on education which has persisted throughout the nineties in Zimbabwe, mainly due to the high levels of

unemployment of secondary school leavers and recently of university graduates. The pressure is now directed towards the **relevance** and **quality** of the education, hence the curriculum.

## 2.2 THE AIMS OF EDUCATION AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON CURRICULUM THEORY

National aims of education have an influence on curriculum design. Educationists themselves have **aims** that **motivate** them and **guide** what they do. Historically, aims may be put into two categories: aims concerned with producing a certain *type of person* and aims concerned with producing people capable of fulfilling a *particular role* (Wheeler 1967: 13) (own emphasis).

### 2.2.1 Aims as ideals

On a philosophical level, aims are **ideals** and through history, from ancient Greece to the present, the **importance** of education, the importance of **what it does** and what it might be **structured** to do, has been a concern for major western philosophers. According to Walker and Soltis (1992: 13) the following philosophers are the landmarks in the development of **aims** of education:

- the Greek philosopher Plato who in the fourth century B.C. wrote the **Republic** a major work on government and education aimed at producing the **just state**.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau the French philosopher, who in the eighteenth century wrote **Emile** a treatise on **education for freedom**.
- John Dewey, America's foremost philosopher, who in the twentieth century wrote **Democracy and Education** in which he described a form of education that would serve as the prime fashioner of **individual growth** and a **progressive democratic society**.

Walker and Soltis (1992: 13) contend that what prompted these great philosophers of their time to write their philosophical works were **ideal aims of education**. They point out that "Each of these works views education as the major instrument for producing an **ideal** state of affairs: a just state, a free individual or a truly democratic society. As such they are statements of aims that

probably are not fully attainable" (Walker and Soltis 1992: 13). While Walker and Soltis (1992: 13) accept that such ideal aims are not attainable they do contend that there is some merit in them. They state that these ideal aims "proclaim the **high value** we should place on *justice, freedom* and *democracy*. They also suggest **educational practices** and **procedures** that will be consistent with these values and help us achieve at least their partial attainment. Thus they serve as **inspirational visions** of good and stress the role of education in the human quest for the **Good Life**" (own emphasis).

### 2.2.2 Traditional and progressive perspectives on curriculum

According to Walker and Soltis (1992: 18), the first half of the twentieth century witnessed a running battle between **progressive** educators, who saw in the ideas of Dewey and other progressives *new* ways to think about the curriculum, and **traditionalists** who were sure that the basic curriculum did not need change because it had proven itself *essential* to the education of individuals who would maintain an intellectually sound and civilized society. The progressives shared their opposition to prevailing school practices such as rote memorization, drill, stern discipline and the learning of fixed subject matter defined in adult terms with little relation to the life of the child (Walker and Soltis 1992: 18 - 19). The progressives however differed in the proposed replacements for the existing traditional practices, generating a range of ideas.

Walker and Soltis state in this regard:

> *"With respect to **curriculum revision** for example, some advocated programs built around the arts and self expression, others championed curricula built around practical training for work and homemaking, and still others urged individualized curricula tailored to the needs of each pupil. Some even expected children to generate their own curriculum based on their own interests and purposes".*

All this resulted in serious debates over curriculum whose outcome was according to Walker and Soltis (1992: 19) "a rich outpouring of ideas about **curriculum** and **aims**, ideas that continue to influence both reformers and traditionalists to this day". They conclude, "an awareness of the leading ideas of progressivism and traditional ideas that were the target of progressive reform

movements is *indispensable* to understanding *contemporary thinking* about the aims of education" (own emphasis).

### 2.2.3 Aims of education and curriculum theory

Taba (1962: 420) defines a **theory of curriculum** as "a way of **organising thinking** about all matters that are important to **curriculum development**: what the curriculum consists of, what its important *elements* are, how these are *chosen* and *organised*, what the *sources* of curriculum decisions are and how the *information* and *criteria* from these sources are *translated* into **curriculum decisions**". Walker and Soltis (1992: 23) point out that curriculum theory is closely connected with our views of what is **true** and **important** about ourselves and our world, and thus reaches far down into our *personal, social* and *cultural* depths. They go further, "In deciding **what** and **how** to teach our children, we are expressing and thus exposing and risking our identity - personal, social and cultural".

One way of relating curriculum theory to the aims of education is through the concept of **general education**. According to Wheeler (1967: 13 - 14) general education is concerned with *maintaining* **the culture** as it is , a *well-integrated, interactive* whole. The **principal content,** *the major universals in the cultural core* are those forms of *knowledge*, the *skills, values* and *attitudes* that motivate members of society to *discriminate* between *right* and *wrong, true* and *false* in all situations of everyday life (own emphasis). The basic questions that bring about the relationship of curriculum theory and aims of education are:

- What kind of education would best ensure every person's attainment of effective and responsible membership in a democratic society ?
- What kind of education would prepare each person for any situation they may encounter in life ?

The aim of general education is to find the most appropriate **common curriculum** and **aims** to meet these difficult requirements of honouring *individuality* while serving the *democratic purposes of society* (Walker and Soltis 1992: 25) (own emphasis).

Another broad classification of the broad aims of education is **education for life** and **education for earning a living** (Finch and Crunkilton 1993: 8). This conception of **aims** of education is very relevant to this study because it brings in the **vocational** dimension of curriculum theory and development. Teaching is a vocation and teacher education prepares students for a career in one of the most important **caring** professions. The teaching practice curriculum being developed has to be built on a sound theory of curriculum development in vocational education. Finch and Crunkilton (1993: 8) rightly point out that the two broad aims; education for *life* and education for *earning a living*, are not mutually exclusive and that each must be considered in the light of the other.

According to Walker and Soltis (1992: 33 - 34) the quest for the most effective curriculum for general education has been approached from three perspectives; the **student-centred** perspective, the **subject-centred** perspective and the **society-centred** perspective. Print (1989: 65 and McNeil 1996: 1) refer to these curriculum perspectives as **conceptions**. Wheeler (1967) and Eisner (1979) refer to them as **orientations**. Taba (1962: 3) observed that child-centred, society-centred and subject-centred curricula were vying with each other as the **exclusive approaches** to the *entire* curriculum and was critical of this, because it caused confusion in curriculum planning. Print (1989: 65) discusses five conceptions of the curriculum derived from McNeil (1981) which are:

- Academic rationalist conception
- Humanistic conception
- Social reconstructionist conception
- Technological conception
- Eclectic conception.

These *conceptions* of the curriculum relate to Walker and Soltis' (1992: 33 - 34) curriculum *perspectives* as follows:

- The subject-centred perspective corresponds to the academic rationalist conception.
- The society-centred perspective corresponds to the social reconstructionist conception.
- The student-centred perspective corresponds to the humanistic conception.

- When the three perspectives to general education are taken into account, this corresponds to the eclectic conception.

A discussion of these perspectives of general knowledge and the conceptions of curriculum follows.

The **subject-centred perspective** which sees education existing primarily to transmit knowledge to each generation and prepare them to add to it is perhaps the oldest idea of general education. Aims of education under this perspective include:

- Literacy
- Command of basic skills
- Mastery of basic facts and theories in fundamental subjects
- Critical thinking
- Problem solving
- Good study skills and work habits
- Desire to learn (Walker and Soltis 1992: 33 - 34).

McNeil (1996: 95) points out that whether it is presented as forms of knowledge, compartmentalized disciplines, Great Books, or cultural literacy, the **academic curriculum** has certain attributes related to **purpose, method, organisation** and **evaluation**.

According to the **academic rationalist conception**, the major function of the school curriculum is to enhance the individual's intellectual abilities in those subject areas worthy of study (Print 1989: 66). According to McNeil (1996: 95) the purposes of academic curriculum are to develop rational minds. The content of the academic rationalist curriculum consists of the **knowledge, skills** and **values** to be found in the various academic disciplines and the teaching approach is **teacher-centred**, while the evaluation is through **examinations** and the **testing** of knowledge and skills (Print 1989: 66 - 67) (own emphasis).

The **society-centred perspective** stressed the view that education is an instrument of society with educated people improving the general welfare of society at large. Social reconstructionists are interested in the *relationship* between **curriculum** and the **social, political** and **economic development** of society (McNeil 1996: 33). Walker and Soltis (1992: 35) point out that early

in the twentieth century, progressive educators placed enormous emphasis on the **social role** of education and fought vigorously against what they saw as a **narrow academic** focus of the schools (own emphasis).

The society-centred perspective of general education favours such aims as:

- Civic responsibility
- Vocational preparation
- Development of democratic attitudes
- Health
- Personal and social adjustment
- Ethical values and behaviour
- Concern for the welfare of others.

The *primary* purpose of the social reconstructionist curriculum is to confront the learner with the many severe problems that humankind faces (McNeil 1996: 35).

The **social reconstructionists** see the school curriculum as a vehicle of social reform and helping in the production of a better society. The needs and betterment of the society are paramount to those of the individual. The purpose of the school curriculum is seen as also an agent of social change rather than a bastion of the *status quo* (Print 1989: 69). While the social reconstructionist curriculum has no universal objectives and content (McNeil 1996: 35) its content is drawn from societal needs and social issues and the skills of analysis, deduction, information processing and inquiry are encouraged to facilitate the organisation of critically oriented knowledge (Print 1989: 69). McNeil (1996: 36) points out that for the social reconstructionist a learning opportunity must fulfil these three criteria; it must be **real**, it must require **action** and it must teach **values.** The methods used in teaching the social reconstructionist curriculum include group discussions, group experiences and group investigation of social problems. On evaluation while traditional approaches of tests and examinations are used, there is student involvement in their construction and administration. This it is said, overcomes the biases of these traditional approaches of evaluation (Print 1979: 70). A typical example of the social-reconstructionist approach to the curriculum are the works of Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire.

The **student-centred perspective** of general education places great importance on individual rights, the development of individual talents, personal fulfilment, the pursuit of happiness, and individual social, economic and intellectual advancement. According to Walker and Soltis (1992: 35) "Freedom is the rallying cry of this group, and the vision of education freed from authoritarianism and compulsion, from conformity and rigidity, has captured the imagination of many generations of educational reformers. At the goading of these reformers struggling under the banner of freedom, modern education has shed some of its harshest characteristics. Stern discipline, punishment and fear have given way to more positive methods involving warmth, kindness and respect".

Those who adopt the **student-centred perspective** of general education tend to favour such aims as:

- Self-actualization
- Self-esteem, emotional stability, mental health
- Creative expression
- Cultivation of personal talents and interests
- Wise use of leisure time
- Preparation for contemporary life
- Health and safety (Walker and Soltis 1992: 36).

According to Print (1989: 67) the humanistic or personal relevance conception supports the view that the school curriculum should provide learners with **intrinsically rewarding** experiences to enhance **personal development** (own emphasis). The curriculum should, according to humanists, provide opportunities to enhance the individual's self-concept in order to achieve **self-actualisation**. McNeil (1996: 1) points out that the humanists hold that the curriculum should provide personally satisfying experiences. The new humanists are **self-actualisers** who view curriculum as a liberating process that can meet the need for **growth, personal integrity** and **autonomy**.

The humanistic conception of the curriculum adopts a **holistic approach** to content selection, striving for the integration of the *cognitive, affective* and *psychomotor* domains. On the methodology, the humanistic perspective to curriculum sees the teacher's role as the provision of a supportive environment to enhance **self-learning**. Experiential learning is also stressed and all these approaches hinge on a *bond of mutual trust* between the **teacher** and the **learner**.

McNeil (1996: 9) observes that a humanistic curriculum demands the context of an **emotional relationship** between students and teacher as the teacher functions as a resource centre motivating students through mutual trust.

The humanistic perspective to curriculum is opposed to the traditional concept of evaluation entailing measuring student performance. Assessment therefore takes a low profile while emphasis is placed on the *experience* of learning rather than the *attainment* of high marks. **"Qualitative** measures that emphasise **process** rather than **product** are used frequently to monitor individual development" (Print 1989: 68) (own emphasis). These include observation, interviews, personal diaries, participation, reflection and anecdotal records.

The three perspectives of general education are all important and should be taken into account in the formulation and development of the curriculum for general education.
Walker and Soltis (1992: 37) rightly point out in this regard:

> *"General education is importantly about **students, society** and **knowledge** and if any one of these components is severely neglected, education is worsened and **all** components suffer. As circumstances change, one perspective or another requires more emphasis, and those who believe strongly in the primacy of the neglected component will be among the first to speak out and work to correct the problem. The issue seems to be one of priorities and balance among **goals** and **perspectives** all of which have something to contribute"* (own emphasis).

Finch and Crunkillton (1993: 10) bring in the **vocational** and **technical** conception of **general education** when they observe that it is clearly part of every curriculum as it provides the student with a **broad knowledge base** both for *life* and for *earning a living*.

According to Print (1989: 71) curriculum developers often find themselves aligning their positions with two or more curriculum conceptions. This is the **eclectic approach**. Print goes further to point out that while it is quite feasible and even logical to relate to two or more conceptions, difficulties will occur if the conceptions are essentially opposite in nature.

An exploration and examination of curriculum perspectives, orientations or conceptions is not complete, especially in the modern era, without examining the **technological orientation** of curriculum development. McNeil (1996: 1) observes that technologists view curriculum making as a *technological* process for achieving what ever ends policy makers demand and that **efficiency** and **accountability** are overriding **values** to the technologist. Technology influences curriculum in two ways: application and theory, (McNeil 1996: 57). McNeil explains **applied technology** as a plan for systematic use of various **devices** and **media** or a *contrived sequence* of **instruction** based on principles from the behavioural sciences. Examples of technological applications in curriculum development include computer-assisted instruction, systems approaches using objectives, programmed materials, criterion-referenced tests and work stations. Technology contributes to curriculum development also in its theory and philosophy. Technology theory is useful in the development and evaluation of curriculum materials and instructional systems while general systems philosophy is a technological framework for viewing curriculum problems (McNeil 1996: 58).

## 2.3 CONCEPTUALIZING THE CURRICULUM PHENOMENA

**Conceptualising** means developing ways of *thinking* and *talking* about something, including making *distinctions, defining, naming* and *noting significant features* (Walker and Soltis 1992: 39) (own emphasis). Successful conceptualization of some basic curriculum phenomena is a crucial factor in curriculum development. The conceptualization of the curriculum phenomena is part of the *broad* **theory of curriculum development**. According to Taba (1962: 6) curriculum theory should not only *define* the problems with which curriculum development must deal but also *elaborate* the **system of concepts** which must be used to *assess* the *relevance* of these data to education. Some basic curriculum phenomena include: knowledge, the instructional process, the structure of subjects and the program.

### 2.3.1 Conceptualizing knowledge

According to Walker and Soltis (1992: 40) one of the most useful answers to the question of what it is that is taught and learned, was provided by the British philosopher Culbert Ryle in his analysis of the concept of knowledge. Ryle made it clear that there are important differences between knowing **how** to do things and knowing **that** such and such is so. Walker and Soltis (1992: 40) stress that the important point is not that knowing **how** is better or worse than knowing **that** but that it is important to distinguish between types of knowing and how much of what kind of learning is appropriate for a given situation. According to Brady (1990: 38) the distinction between **knowing that** and **knowing how** results in the philosophical debate about the relationship between **practical** and **theoretical** knowledge.

Another way of looking at knowledge within the context of learning and teaching was investigated by Brondy, Smith and Burrett (Walker and Soltis 1992: 41). In their investigation of how the things that are learned in schools are used by the learner in life, they identified four uses of school learning which they called 'replicative', 'associative', 'applicative' and 'interpretive'. **Replicative** implies repeating; that is using what we learnt in similar situations in the future. There are some things in schools that are learned indirectly and students use this kind of learning **associatively**. Knowledge is used **applicatively** when called to mind to solve a problem. Walker and Soltis (1992: 41) state in this regard: "Knowledge can also be used **applicatively**, that is, called to mind for use in solving a problem and not just as an answer to a question **(replication)** or in connection with other things **(association)"** (own emphasis). Knowledge is used **interpretively** when it is used to understand a situation and not for solving a problem or answering a question.

Bloom (Walker and Soltis 1992: 42) has also contributed to our understanding of how knowledge is used and how this use demonstrates higher levels of mastery of learning. As Walker and Soltis (1992: 40) rightly point out, Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives allows teachers and curriculum or measurement specialists to aim at, instruct for and test different levels of cognitive objectives more systematically. The taxonomy is arranged in six main levels from lowest to highest with each higher level involving mental processes and uses of knowledge that are more complex and abstract than the ones below it (Walker and Soltis 1992: 42). The first level is

**knowledge** and includes objectives that call for recall from memory. It is similar to Brondy *et al's* **replication** this might be recall of facts, categories, methods or theories. The second level is **comprehension** which is similar to Brondy *et al's* **association** and **interpretation**. The third level is **application** where students use some concept or principle by applying it to a new and unfamiliar situation (Walker and Soltis 1992: 42). The fourth and fifth levels are **analysis** and **synthesis.** In analysis the student breaks down a complex set of ideas into its constituent elements, relationships and principles while in synthesis, the student builds up from a set of such constituents. The sixth and highest level is **evaluation** which consists of objectives that call for qualitative or quantitative judgements about the extent to which given complex entities satisfy appropriate criteria and standards of evidence (Walker and Soltis 1992: 43).

Walker and Soltis (1992: 43) conclude:

> *"The taxonomy, along with its companions in the affective and psychomotor domains, can be used to analyze a curriculum to determine whether all the various levels are represented in appropriate proportions. It can also be used in curriculum development, to plan for an appropriate balance; in implementation, to ensure that the balance is being preserved in the classroom and the school; and in evaluation, to develop an appropriate bank of text items".*

### 2.3.2 Conceptualizing the instructional process

A number of ways of conceptualizing the instructional process have been proposed. Three are discussed here because they have had some influence in educational circles. As Walker and Soltis (1992: 43) point out, the dynamics of student interaction with curriculum and instruction over time has received the attention of theorists.

The first approach to the conceptualization of the instructional process is that of Alfred Worth Whitehead termed the **rhythm of education** (Walker and Soltis 1992: 43) (own emphasis). Whitehead was reacting to what he termed **inert knowledge**; knowledge that connected or reacted with nothing in the lives of students and had little meaning for them. "He argued that knowledge had to be meaningfully introduced and thoroughly learned and reflected on by

students, rather than collected in encyclopaedic fashion. His conception of the rhythm of education can be read as a corrective to such encyclopaedic view of educating and can be applied to the teaching of a subject, of a unit, of a lesson and even to the elementary, secondary and post secondary articulation of education writ large" (Walker and Soltis 1992: 44). Whitehead used the terms, **romance, precision** and **generalization** to characterize the rhythm of education. The introduction to a subject had to be **romantic** full of excitement due to its attractiveness. This makes the subject to come alive, be real and stimulating and thus worth studying. This leads to the stage of **precision** when the student gets to know the subject better and studies it in detail. The **romantic** interest remains and becomes the driving force of self-discipline required for hardwork of studying the subject in detail (Walker and Soltis 1992: 44). The **generalization** stage is reached when more parts of the subject are mastered and the student has an in-depth overall picture of the subject. Walker and Soltis (1992: 44) observe that "Whitehead's conceptualization of the educational process speaks neither to what subjects should be taught nor to what knowledge is, but forces a consideration of **instruction** and **curriculum** as it affects the student" (own emphasis).

Dewey also tried to provide a useful conceptualization of the relationship between instruction and the curriculum as it affects the student (Walker and Soltis 1992: 44 - 45). John Dewey started by acknowledging the tension between **traditional** and **progressive** educators; the former stressing the importance of traditional subject matter and the latter making the student's interests and needs more central. The question which Dewey was answering was, "which is more important, the child or the curriculum ?". Dewey's answer was that "the curriculum contains traditional knowledge, but as curriculum, it must be seen as knowledge in relation to the learner and not as something separate from the teaching - learning process. The point of educating is to bring the child into meaningful contact with traditional knowledge while honouring the learner's interest and needs" (Walker and Soltis 1992: 45). Dewey uses the terms **logical** and **psychological** to conceptualize aspects of subject matter with regard to the teacher and the learner. The logical aspects of the subject matter is its organisation while the psychological aspect is the learner's experiencing of it. According to Dewey, learning proceeds from the psychological to the logical and the child and curriculum become part of each other (Walker and Soltis 1992: 45 - 46).

Jerome Bruner also provided a similar conceptualization of **subject matter, curriculum** and **instruction**. Bruner came up with the well known dictum "the foundations of any subject may be taught to anybody at any age in some form" (Walker and Soltis 1992: 46). According to Bruner all subjects have a basic structure, a basic set of organizing principles, fundamental ideas and relationships. Mastery of the structure of any field, is the key to understanding it, and Bruner believed that curriculum materials and teaching can be organized in such a way as to provide students with what they need to discover a subject's structure on their own (Walker and Soltis 1992: 46).

In the conceptualization of the learning process it is also important to focus on the **criteria** for selecting learning activities. McNeil (1996: 169) identifies five criteria *guiding* and *justifying* the selection of learning activities which are **philosophical, psychological, technological, political** and **practical**. Within the philosophical criteria **values** are the basis for *judging* learning activities and instructional material, while psychological principles *determine how best* learning activities can be organised and implemented. Technological criteria on the other hand have influence on both the *judging* and the *developing* of learning opportunities and overlap extensively with psychological criteria. Political criteria are expressed through **government policies** as well as influential **pressure groups**. Fundamentally, political criteria emphasize the philosophical belief that every human being is important. Practicality as a criterion also operates mostly at policy level and generally takes the form of **economy**.

### 2.3.3 Program conceptualization

The curriculum can be thought of as a programmatic whole. One way of doing this is to think of it **sequentially** and **interrelatedly**. Walker and Soltis (1992: 49) point out that one of the most comprehensive conceptualizations of the curriculum ever put forward was Dewey's view of the curriculum as history, geography and science. Dewey was concerned with the fragmentation of the curriculum into discrete and unconnected subjects. He believed that the curriculum should reflect the interrelatedness of knowledge as it is used by human beings to understand and solve problems of the world. A curriculum program can be conceptualized as highly integrated and articulated. Ideas like core curriculum, interdisciplinary studies and

general education programs are related to this approach. Paul Hirst approaches the integrated curriculum differently from Dewey, arguing that the main business of education is to develop the **mind**. The mind refers to our ability to know the world through our shared experiences of the world (Walker and Soltis 1992: 50). Hirst believes that human beings can only experience the world in seven or eight basic ways and that the basic forms of human knowledge are mathematics, physical science, knowledge of persons, literature and fine arts, morals, religion and philosophy. Each represents our codified ways of experiencing different aspects of the human and natural world we inhabit (Walker and Soltis 1992: 50).

This discussion of the conceptualization of the curriculum phenomena lays the foundation for a discussion of the foundations of the curriculum. The basic question to be answered is **"On what foundations is curriculum development based ?"**

## 2.4 CURRICULUM FOUNDATIONS

Print (1989: 51) poses this pertinent question:

> *"From where do curriculum developers obtain their basic understanding of **education** and **curriculum**"* (own emphasis).

The answer to this question demands an investigation of the **foundations** of curriculum. Print (1989: 51) defines curriculum foundations "as those basic forces that influence and shape the minds of curriculum developers and hence the content and structure of the subsequent curriculum". Print (1989: 51) distinguishes three categories of sources of curriculum foundations from the relevant literature which are:

- Studies of learners and learning theory (psychology)
- Studies of life (sociology and culture)
- Studies of the nature and value of knowledge (philosophy)

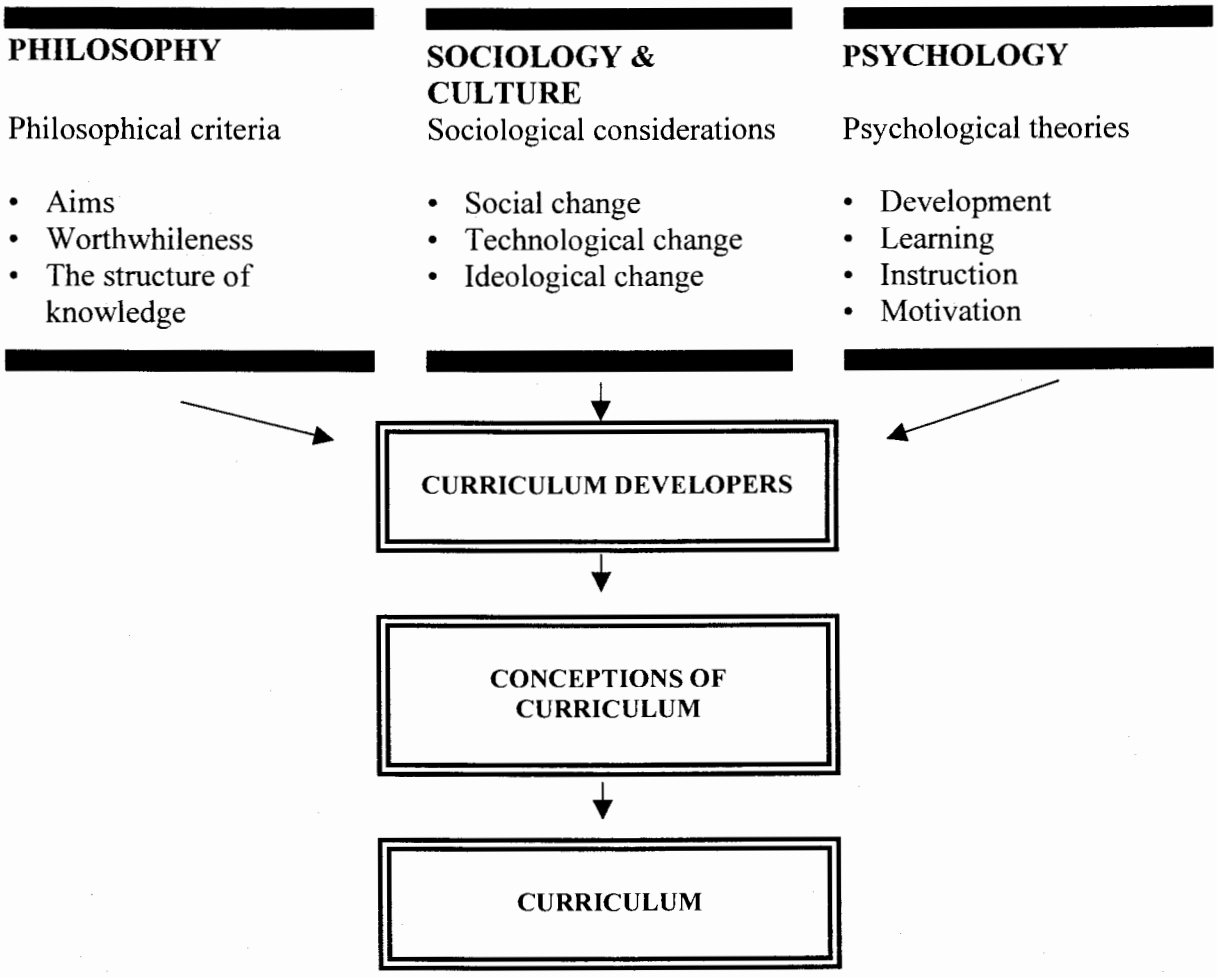
Brady (1990: 35) observed that in the development of a curriculum the **knowledge** and **insights** derived from the *major* disciplines of education - philosophy, sociology and psychology **inform**

nearly every aspect of planning. Curriculum foundations is the theoretical framework for planning and developing a curriculum.

Using Print's (1989: 52) model of curriculum foundations which is a modification of Lawton's model (Brady 1990: 37) the way the three curriculum foundation disciplines contribute to curriculum development is clearly revealed (see figure 2.1)

**FIGURE 2.1**

**CURRICULUM FOUNDATION**
**(Print 1989: 52 & Brady 1990: 37)**



Briefly, the three curriculum foundations merge together to influence curriculum developers in their consideration of curricula. The influence affects the developers' way of thinking about curricula and, in the process, produces conceptions of curricula. At some later time developers express these conceptions when devising curricula (Print 1989: 51).

On the same issue of curriculum foundations, Wiles and Bondi (1979: 52) state; "Four major areas of study have become recognized: social forces affecting schools, treatments of knowledge, human growth and development, and learning as a process. These four areas comprise the basic foundations of curriculum planning".

There is a very close resemblance between Print's and Wiles and Bondi's classifications of the foundations of curriculum as follows:

- Print's studies of learners and learning theory (psychology) relate to Wiles and Bondi's human growth and development and the learning process.
- Print's studies of life (sociology and culture) relate to Wiles and Bondi's social forces affecting schools.
- Print's studies of nature and value of knowledge relate to Wiles and Bondi's treatment of knowledge.

A brief discussion of these foundations of curriculum development which are critical to any venture into the development of a curriculum follows.

### 2.4.1 Philosophical foundations of the curriculum

Print (1989: 53) points out that philosophy and philosophical assumptions are basic to all curriculum foundations as they are concerned with making sense of what we encounter in our lives. According to Zais (1976: 105) every society is held together by a common faith or **"philosophy"** which serves its members as a guide for living the *good* life. Both Print (1989: 53 and Brady (1990: 38) quote Hirst (1968: 39) who sees philosophy as concerned with **clarification** of *concepts* and *propositions* in which our **experience** and **activities** are intelligible.

Print (1989: 53) then concludes:

> *"For curriculum developers then, an understanding of philosophy and a comprehension of one's own educational philosophy are essential in order to make useful and intelligible statements about* ***experience*** *which are to be passed on to subsequent generations"* (own emphasis).

Wiles and Bondi (1979: 81) contend that a philosophy, the clarification of beliefs about the **purpose** and **goals** of education, is essential to curriculum development (own emphasis). They view the development of a philosophy of education as a prerequisite to assuming a leadership function in schools' program development. On the same issue of philosophy and curriculum questions, Walker (1990: 91) makes the following observation:

> *"The* ***ideas*** *people have developed over the centuries to help them handle curriculum matters are* ***the most valuable things*** *anyone can learn from the study of curriculum. The* ***techniques, methods*** *and procedures people have developed are* ***useful*** *in* ***particular situations*** *but the* ***ideas*** *are essential as a vocabulary for* ***thinking*** *and* ***communicating*** *about curriculum matters".*

Walker concludes:

> *"For most of recorded history, questions about the* ***purpose, content*** *and* ***structure*** *of educational programs have been considered a special case of the grand question of how life should be lived"* (own emphasis).

Wiles and Bondi (1979: 75) point out that major philosophies of life and education have traditionally been defined by three criteria: What is good ? What is true ? What is real ? Individual perceptions of goodness, truth and reality differ considerably and an analysis of these questions reveals unique patterns of response. When these responses are categorized and labelled they become formal philosophies. The answers to the three questions posed by Wiles and Bondi have resulted in three aspects of philosophical theory that have influenced curriculum thought and development. These are **ontology** which is concerned with the nature of **reality, epistemology** which deals with the nature of **knowledge** and the nature of knowing, and **axiology** which is concerned with the nature of **value**. To the curriculum developer ontology, epistemology and axiology provide a useful structure for examination of one's philosophical

position as well as how philosophical stances affect the development of curricula (Print (1989: 57).

### 2.4.2 The sociological foundations of curriculum

On the issue of the cultural influence on the curriculum Print (1989: 58) observes that it is hardly surprising that **society** and **culture** exert enormous influence on the formation of the school curriculum or indeed any curriculum since it was **society** that devised schooling to ensure the survival of the cultural heritage. It is sociology in the main that has helped society **understand** and **cope** with social change. The purpose of sociology is the *analysis* of **organised human relationships** and its major contribution to curriculum development has been the making of decisions about the **content** of the curriculum with its main focus being the understanding of the direction of **socialization** of the individual. Brady (1990: 46 - 48) identifies the following other areas where sociology contributes to curriculum development:

- It analyses and predicts future trends
- It provides extensive information about social backgrounds of students
- Sociology provides a realistic evaluation of the teacher's role and school in social change
- It also increases the teacher's flexibility, tolerance and awareness of methods of inquiry.

### 2.4.3 The psychological foundations of curriculum

The purpose of psychology is to study **human behaviour**. Psychology describes, explains and predicts human behaviour (Brady 1990: 42). Just as philosophy, psychology contributes both information and its methods of inquiry into the development of curriculum. Print (1989: 62) acknowledges that the contribution of psychological sources to the foundations of curriculum is significant and growing. He goes further to define psychology as the study of **human behaviour**, with psychologists concerned with **describing, explaining, predicting** and

**investigating** human behaviour (own emphasis). Print then identifies the following five areas of educational psychology from which the curriculum can draw:

- Educational objectives
- Student characteristics
- Learning processes
- Teaching methods
- Evaluation procedures.

A knowledge of the psychology of learning helps the curriculum developer to devise and phrase appropriate goals and objectives (Print 1989: 63). Through psychology the nature of learners, their personalities and individual differences are appreciated, helping the curriculum developer in decision making. Psychology has contributed immensely to the understanding of how people learn and thus to learning theory. Psychology has also contributed to both the selection of learning experiences and the methods of teaching to suit categories of students. Lastly psychology has influenced the approach to evaluation of students and teacher performance. Psychological tests have been developed to measure such factors as student learning, student attitude to learning and teacher effectiveness (Print 1989: 63; Brady 1990: 49)

The contribution of philosophy, sociology and psychology to curriculum development is fundamental as well as critical. A study of curriculum foundations as predetermined by philosophical, sociological and psychological concerns is a prerequisite task of any would be curriculum developer. According to Brady (1990: 49) a systematic and conscious consideration of the contributions of philosophy, psychology and sociology should clarify the task of, and improve the quality of curriculum development. It is also important for a curriculum developer to be aware of models of curriculum development in order to choose the one best suited for his situation and circumstances. A brief discussion of some models of curriculum development follows.

## 2.5 MODELS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

### 2.5.1 The concept of model

Finch and Crunkilton (1993: 28) define a model as a simplified yet communicable representation of a real-world setting or situation. Similarly, Print (1989: 18) explains a model as a simplified representation of reality which is often depicted in diagrammatic form. According to Finch and Crunkilton (1993: 28) of basic concern is how well the model communicates what is happening in the real world. Print (1989: 18) explains how this communication takes place when he says that the purpose of a model is to provide a structure for examining the variables that constitute reality as well as their interrelationships. Curriculum theorists frequently use graphical models as they enable curriculum developers to visualise curriculum elements, their relationships, and the process of development and implementation.

### 2.5.2 Classification of curriculum models

While a number of curriculum models have been developed for the purpose of this study, the classification of Print (1989) and Brady (1990) is adopted because they group the various models along a continuum, making it easier to compare the various models. Print (1989: 20) sees the continuum of curriculum models depicting two extremes of the curriculum process as seen in figure 2.2 below.

**FIGURE 2.2**

**A CONTINUUM OF CURRICULUM MODELS**

**(Print 1989: 21)**

| Rational/Objectives Models | Cyclical Models | Dynamic/interaction Models |
|---|---|---|
| Tyler | Wheeler | Walker |
| Taba | Nicholls | Skilbeck |

On one extreme are the **rational** or **objectives** models that are sequential, rather rigid approaches to viewing the curriculum process, while at the other extreme may be found **dynamic** or **interaction** models, which view curriculum processes as flexible, interactive and modifiable. In between models gradually change from one type to the other (Print 1989: 20). Somewhere at the centre of the curriculum continuum, Print (1989: 20 - 21) places the **cyclical** models which while rational in approach, are becoming increasingly more flexible in application.

Brady gives a similar explanation of the continuum of curriculum models but with a number of the characteristics of the models built into the continuum. Brady's continuum is shown in figure 2.3.

**FIGURE 2.3**

## BRADY'S CONTINUUM OF THE CURRICULUM MODELS

**(Brady 1990: 66)**

**THE CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: A CONTINUUM**

| | **Objectives model** ——— **Interaction model** | |
|---|---|---|
| Sequence: | Fixed | Free |
| Beginning: | Objectives | Any element |
| Movement among the elements during development: | Limited | Unlimited |

In explaining his continuum of curriculum models, Brady (1990: 66 - 67) states: "The **objectives model** and **interaction model** are given pride of place in this examination as they are seen to form a continuum, ranging from the fixed and inflexible on the one hand to the free and flexible on the other". Brady goes further to point out that some models are **cyclic** in nature, suggesting that curriculum development is a continuous process. As many of these models suggest that curriculum development can begin at any point, they avoid the more rigid sequence of the objectives model (1990: 67) (own emphasis).

A brief description of each of the three representative models; the rational, cyclic and dynamic or interactional follows. Some strengths and weaknesses of each of the models will be highlighted.

### *2.5.2.1 Rational models of curriculum*

The rational model of curriculum development is called by a number of names which include: the objectives model, the classical model, the means-end model, the scientific model, the logical model and the sequential model. All the names for this model are descriptive of the model. The rational models are **logical** and **sequential**. They emphasize the fixed sequence of curriculum elements, beginning with objectives and following a sequential pattern from objectives to content, method and finally evaluation (Print 1989: 21). Brady (1990: 58 - 59) states that supporters of the rational model argue that the first step of stating objectives is the most critical, because the other steps follow from, and are determined by, the first step. Only when the objectives are determined can content be selected and organised. The process of evaluation is the process of determining to what extent the objectives are achieved through the selected content and method.

The chief proponents of the rational model are Ralph Tyler and Hilda Taba (Print 1989: 21). However Brady, (1990: 63) classifies Taba's model as interactional or dynamic rather than rational and objective. Tyler's model of curriculum development is depicted in figure 2.4.

**FIGURE 2.4**

**TYLER'S MODEL OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**
**(Print 1989: 22)**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Objectives** ↓ | What educational purposes should the school seek to attain? |
| **Selecting learning experiences** ↓ | What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes ? |
| **Organising learning experiences** ↓ | How can these educational experiences be effectively organised ? |
| **Evaluation** | How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained ? |

Tyler argued that curriculum development needed to be treated logically and systematically (Print 1989: 21). Print goes further; "Sometimes referred to as the 'father' of the curriculum movement, Tyler sought to instil in developers of curricula a more **logical, systematic, meaningful** approach to their task (own emphasis).

Taba's model of curriculum development is outlined in her work **Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice (1962)**. She modified Tyler's basic model to become more representative of curriculum development in schools. Taba's model of curriculum development is shown in figure 2.5.

**FIGURE 2.5**

# TABA'S MODEL OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

**(Taba 1962: 12)**

The order, as Taba perceives it, is:

**Step 1**: Diagnosis of needs
**Step 2**: Formulation of objectives
**Step 3**: Selection of content
**Step 4**: Organisation of content
**Step 5**: Selection of learning experiences
**Step 6**: Organisation of learning experiences
**Step 7**: Determination of what to evaluate and ways and means of doing it.

While still linear in approach, Taba argued for more information input at each stage of the curriculum process. She further argued for a rational, sequential approach to curriculum development rather than rule-of-thumb procedure and this could only be done if **curriculum decisions** were based on **valid criteria** (Taba 1962: 10).

The following **strengths** of the rational model have been identified:

- Print (1989: 25) states: "The very nature of the rational model - its logical, sequential structure - provides it with a useful base for planning and devising curricula. In support of this assertion, Brady (1990: 61) quotes Kliebard (1970) who claims, "One reason for the success of the Tyler rationale is its very rationality. It is an eminently reasonable framework for developing a curriculum. In one sense, the Tyler rationale is imperishable".

- According to Print (1989: 25) by emphasising the role and value of objectives, this model forces curriculum developers to think seriously about their task. As Taba (1962: 12) puts it, "Formulation of **clear** and **comprehensive** objectives provides an *essential platform* for the curriculum". Proponents of the rational approach argue that all curriculum developers, regardless of their approach to curriculum, have objectives in mind, although some do not think about them systematically or state them logically. Brady (1990: 61) concurs with Print on this strength of the rational model when he says: "By making objectives the essential first step, the model provides the developer with a clear direction and a guide for the remainder of the process".

The following **weaknesses** of the rational model have been identified by a number of researchers and curriculum developers:

- The objectives model has **flaws** in terms of the *reality* of curriculum development which is rarely a fixed or linear process.

- Another weakness of the rationale model is that it overlooks the *unpredictable* nature of **teaching** and **learning**. While the model prescribes specific objectives to be achieved, learning occurs beyond these objectives due to factors that could not be foreseen (Print 1989: 26). The model cannot account for the many *complex* outcomes of learning (Brady 1990: 62).

- The other criticism that has been cited is that educational objectives need not *precede* the selection and organisation of learning experiences (Print 1989: 26; Brady 1990: 62).

- Lastly, the exponents of the rational model, especially Tyler, have been criticized for not adequately explaining the sources of their objectives (Print 1989: 26; Brady 1990: 62).

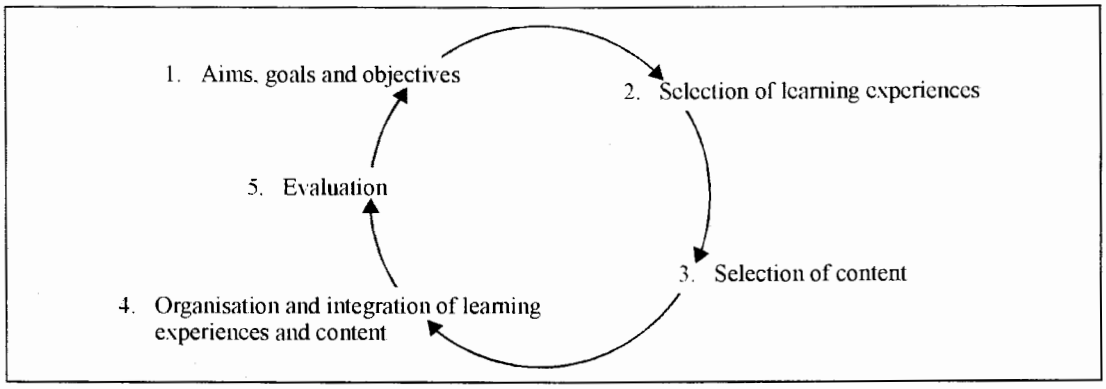
### *2.5.2.2 The cyclical models of curriculum development*

The cyclical models lie along the continuum between the extremes of rational and dynamic models, incorporating elements of both to provide a different approach to devising curricula (Print 1989: 27). The cyclical models are basically extensions of rational models with the major difference being that cyclical models see the curriculum process as a *continuing* activity, **constantly in a state of change** as new information or practices become available. Two popular exponents of the cyclical model are Wheeler and the team of Audrey and Howard Nicholls; the former with writers in the field and the latter with teachers.

Wheeler's cyclical model of curriculum development is expounded in his work **Curriculum Process**, (1967). The model is produced in figure 2.6.

**FIGURE 2.6**

**WHEELER'S CYCLICAL MODEL OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**
**(Wheeler 1967: 31)**




Wheeler suggested that curriculum developers employ a cyclical process of curriculum development, in which each element is related and interdependent (Print 1989: 28). Wheeler's model (1962: 30 - 31) has five phases linked in a cyclical fashion as follows:

- Selection of aims, goals and objectives
- Selection of learning experiences to help in the attainment of these aims, goals and objectives

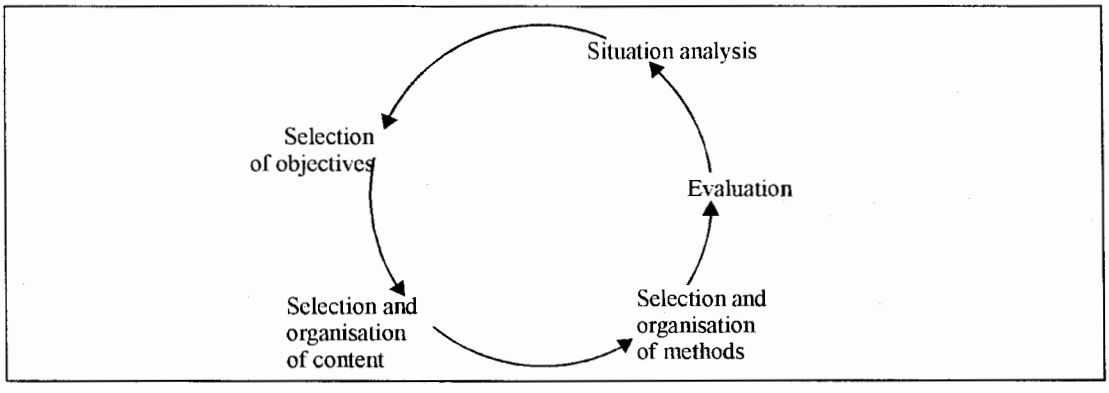
- Selection of content (subject matter) through which certain types of experience may be offered
- Organisation and integration of learning experiences and content with respect to the teaching-learning process
- Evaluation of each phase and the attainment of goals.

Print (1989: 28) acknowledges Wheeler's significant contribution to curriculum development as the emphasis of the **cyclical nature** of the curriculum process and the **interdependent nature** of the curriculum elements.

Audrey and Howard Nicholls (1978) devised a straightforward cyclical approach that covered the elements of curriculum briefly but succinctly (Print 1989: 29). They based their model on Tyler, Taba and Wheeler, emphasising the cyclical nature of the curriculum process and introducing a new step - **situation analysis**. Audrey and Howard Nicholls stressed that before the curriculum is developed, the **context** or **situation** in which the curriculum decisions are to be made requires a detailed and serious consideration (own emphasis) (Print 1989: 29). Nicholls' cyclical model of curriculum development is depicted in figure 2.7.

**FIGURE 2.7**

**NICHOLLS' CYCLICAL MODEL OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**
**(Print 1989: 30)**



The five stages of Nicholls' cyclical model are:

- situation analysis
- selection of objectives
- selection and organisation of content
- selection and organisation of methods, and
- evaluation.

The inclusion of the **situation analysis** phase was a deliberate move to force curriculum developers in schools to be more responsive to their environment and particularly to the needs of learners (Print 1989: 30).

The **cyclical models** of curriculum development have the following **advantages**:

- They incorporate the advantages inherent in the objective models and the same time overcome most of the weaknesses of the objective models.
- By employing situation analysis as a starting point, cyclical models provide baseline data upon which effective objectives may be devised.
- Because they are less rigid in their application, cyclical models are more relevant to school situations and hence are more appropriate to curriculum development by teachers.

On weaknesses of the cyclical model, Print (1989: 31) argues that inherent weaknesses within the model are more difficult to locate largely because of its successful employment by curriculum developers. One weakness of the model according to Print (1989: 32) might be in the time consuming nature of the situation analysis stage. As a result teachers tend to rely on their intuition rather than to undergo a detailed time consuming situational analysis.

### *2.5.2.3 The dynamic or interactional models of curriculum development*

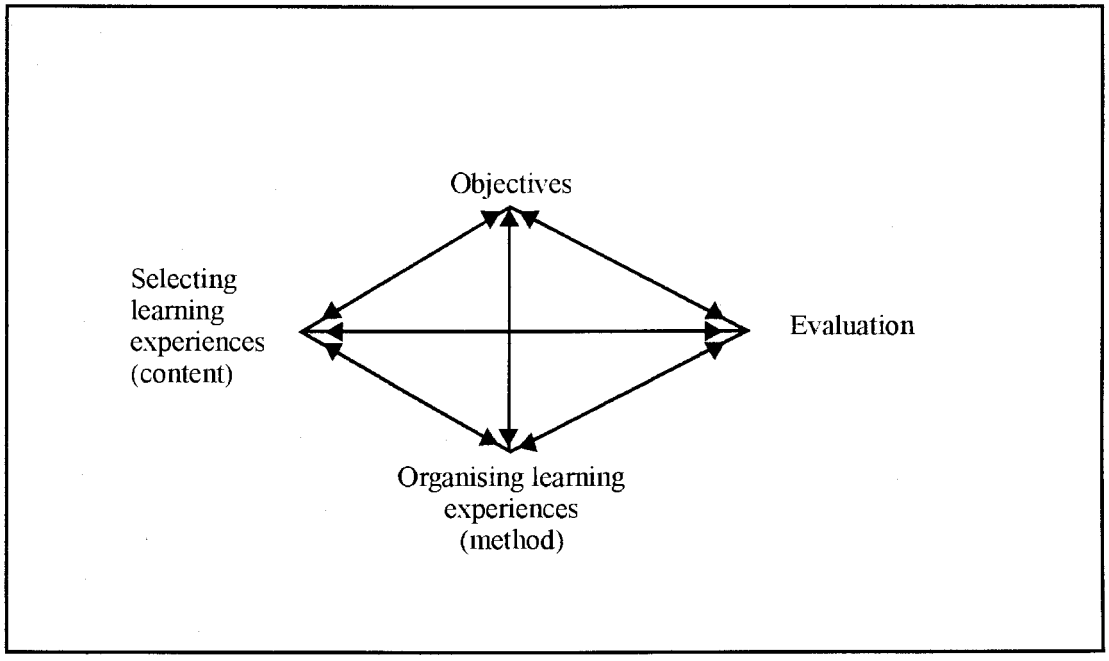
The basic tenet of the **dynamic** or **interactional** models of curriculum development is that curriculum development is a *dynamic* and *interactive process* which can begin with any curriculum element (Print 1989: 32; Brady 1990: 63). The proponents of this approach to curriculum development argue that the curriculum process does not follow **a lineal, sequential**

pattern (own emphasis). Dynamic models have emerged from a more **descriptive** approach to curriculum where researchers have observed the behaviour of teachers and developers as they devise curricula. Consequently the **analytical** and **prescriptive** approach, the very basis of the objectives and cyclical models, is not prominent in the dynamic models.

Taba (1962: 425) examined the relationships among the curriculum elements and their schematic representations. Figure 2.8, which Brady (1990: 63 gives as a schematic representation of the interaction model, was used by Taba (1962: 425) as an example of the relationships of the curriculum elements.

**FIGURE 2.8**

**THE INTERACTION MODEL**
**(Taba 1962: 425; Brady 1990: 63)**

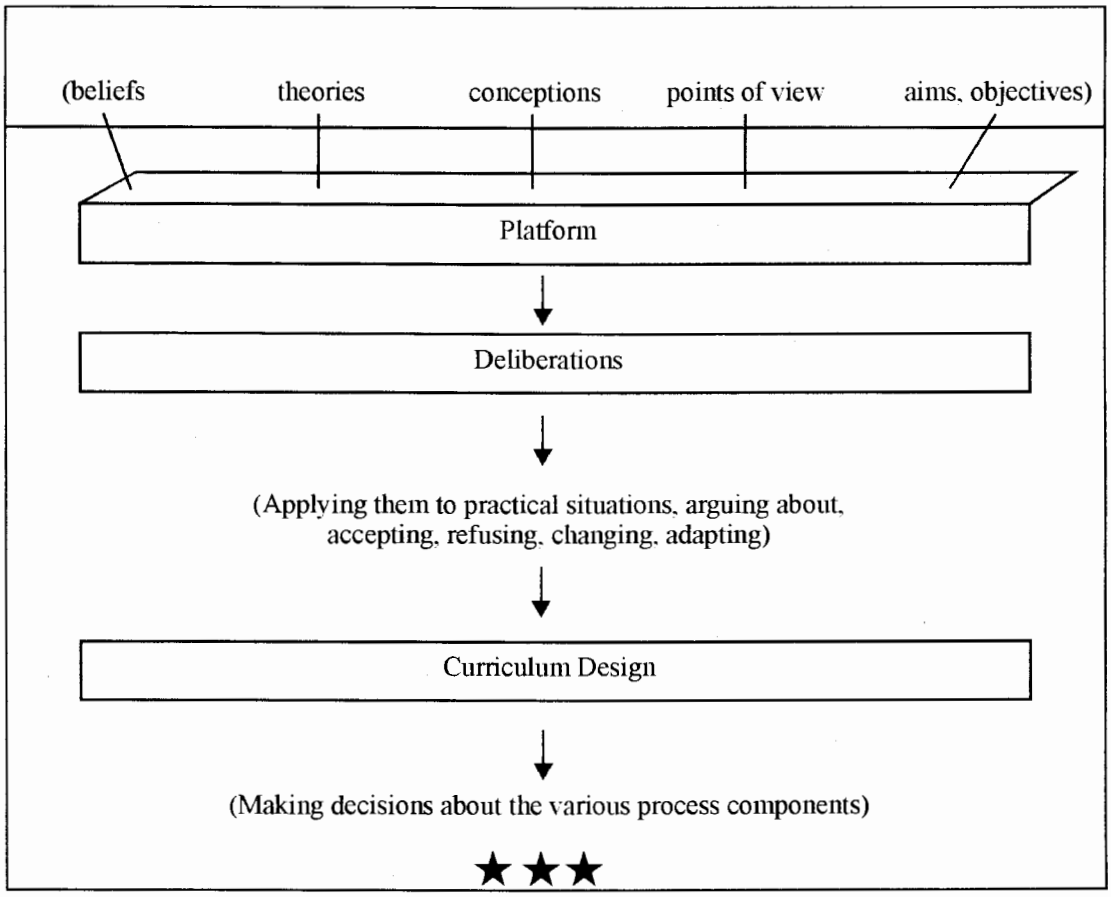



According to Print (1989: 32) the major proponents of the dynamic or interaction model are Decker Walker (1971) and Malcolm Skilbeck (1976). Decker Walker argued that the objectives or rational models of curriculum development were neither popular nor successful. Walker contended that curriculum developers do not follow the prescriptive approach of the rational sequence of curriculum elements when they devise curriculum but proceed through three phrases

in their **natural** preparation of curricula. Walker's model of curriculum development is shown in figure 2.9.

**FIGURE 2.9**

**WALKER'S MODEL OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**
**(Print 1989: 33)**

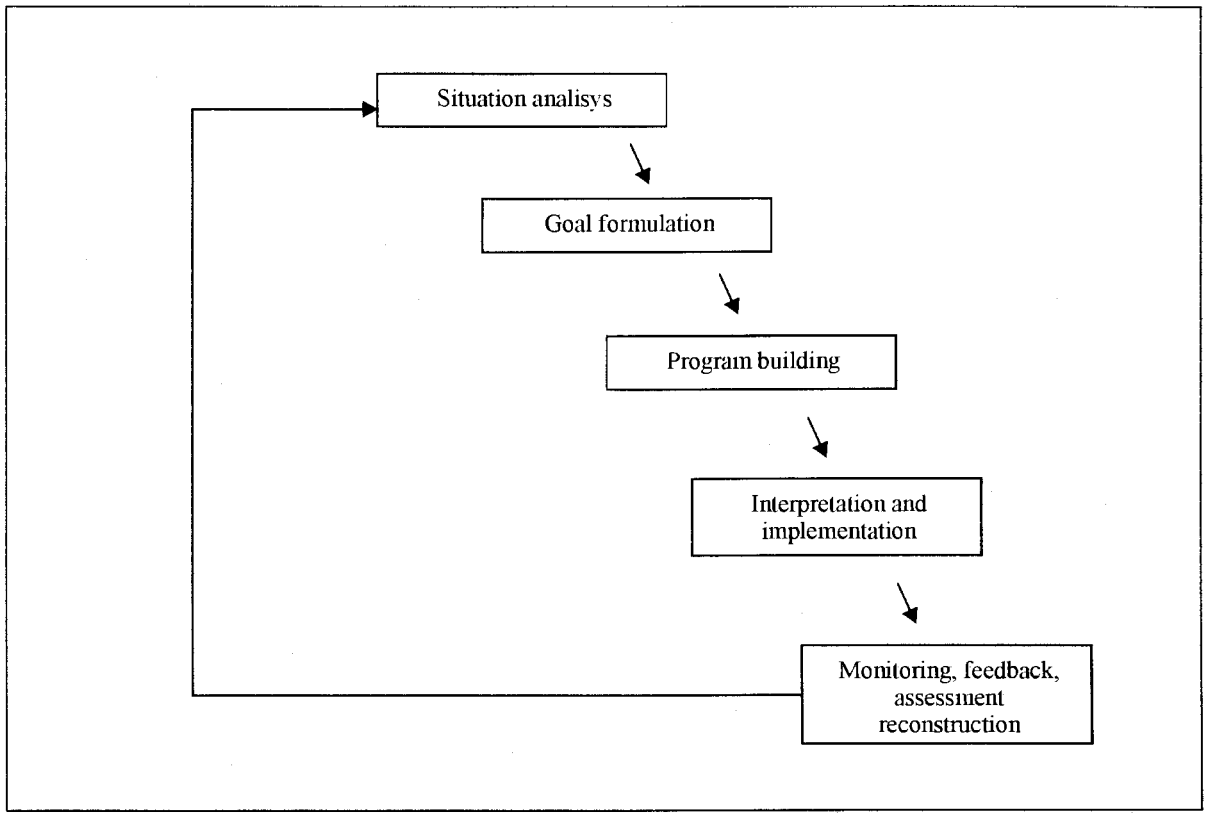



The three phases of Walker's model are the platform phase, the deliberation phase and the design phase. In the platform phase, **platform statements** made up of ideas, preferences, points of view, beliefs and values that are held by curriculum developers are **recognised**. When the curriculum developers start discussing on the basis of the recognised platform statements, this is the second stage of **deliberation**, which is a **complex, randomised** set of interactions that eventually achieves an enormous amount of background work before the actual curriculum is designed (Print 1989: 34). In the final phase which Walker calls the **design stage**, curriculum developers make decisions about the various components or elements of the curriculum.

Malcolm Skilbeck's **interactive** or **dynamic** model was basically developed for curriculum development at the school level. While supporting the notion that curriculum development may commence with any curriculum element and proceed in any sequence rather than follow the fixed sequence advocated by the rational model, he contends that situation analysis must be undertaken in order to understand the sources of objectives (Print 1989: 35). Skilbeck's dynamic model of curriculum development is depicted in figure 2.10.

**FIGURE 2.10**

**SKILBECK'S DYNAMIC MODEL OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**
**(Print 1989: 35)**



As can be seen from figure 2.10 Skilbeck's model has five stages as follows:

- Situation analysis
- Goal formulation
- Program building
- Interpretation and implementation
- Monitoring, feedback, assessment and reconstruction.

Print (1989: 36) points out that it is tempting to argue that the apparent logical order of Skilbeck's model is rational in nature, however, Skilbeck warns people not to fall into that trap, suggesting that curriculum developers may commence their planning at any of the five stages and proceed in any order, perhaps even handling different stages concurrently.

The **strengths** of the dynamic or interactional models include the following:

- It is claimed by the proponents of these models that they are the **realistic** way of handling curriculum development.

- By avoiding the obsession with writing objectives, and indeed behavioural objectives at that, developers are free to be more creative (Print 1989: 37). The model allows the developer to change the order of planning, to move to and fro among the curriculum elements (Brady 1990: 65).

- Another strength of the model is its **flexibility** when the development task is approached. The flexibility arises from the suggestion that developers may begin at any point in the curriculum process that is appropriate to their needs (Print 1989: 38).

The **weaknesses** of the dynamic models of curriculum development include the following:

- The dynamic models appear confusing and lacking in direction. Brady (1990: 66) states, "The model is not **systematic** in the way the objective model is. It has no one fixed direction or sequence. Critics feel that changing direction at will during the process of curriculum development may be reflected in a piecemeal finished product" (own emphasis). In this vein, Print (1989: 38) contends that "some dynamic models offer so little direction that developers are left perplexed as to what to do".

- The down playing of objectives in the dynamic model has been seen as its other weakness. According to Print (1989: 66) a question that is often asked by opponents of the interaction models is - **How do you know where you are going if you pose few or no objectives** ? (own emphasis). If objectives provide guidance and direction, the argument goes, then they must be stated in order to be effective. Brady (1990: 66) points out that the possible danger of not stating objectives first is that they may

simply be accommodated to the content specification, and thereby be **decorative**, or **contrived as an after thought** (own emphasis).

## 2.6 AN ADOPTION OF A CURRICULUM MODEL

The aim of discussing the broad spectrum of curriculum models as depicted by the **continuum of curriculum models** conceptualised by Print (1989: 21) and Brady (1990: 66) was to make it possible to select or devise a curriculum model that would suit the purpose of this study: **The development of a teaching practice curriculum for teacher education in Zimbabwe.**

The preceding discussion of curriculum development models has shown that they can be broadly classified into three groups or types; the **objective** or **rational** models at one extreme end of the continuum, the **dynamic** or the **interactional** models on the other extreme with the **cyclical** models in the middle. Each group of models has its strengths and weaknesses. In adopting a model for this study the main guiding feature has been the type of task at hand and its context. The approach to the development of a teaching practice curriculum for teacher education in Zimbabwe is *descriptive, investigative* and *analytical.* As such the model adopted has to be *flexible* enough to accommodate those features of the study. Furthermore the approach pursued in determining the model to be used in the study is *eclectic*; drawing on the strengths of the three broad classifications of models of curriculum development just discussed. Therefore the model to be adopted has to have the following features:

- The **rationality** of the objectives model with its scientific approach, logical sequential.
- The **dynamism** of the interactional model, with its inbuilt flexibility and creativity.
- The **middle-of-road approach** of the cyclical model which draws on the ***strengths*** of the rational model while discarding its *weaknesses* and also the strengths of the dynamic or interactionist models.

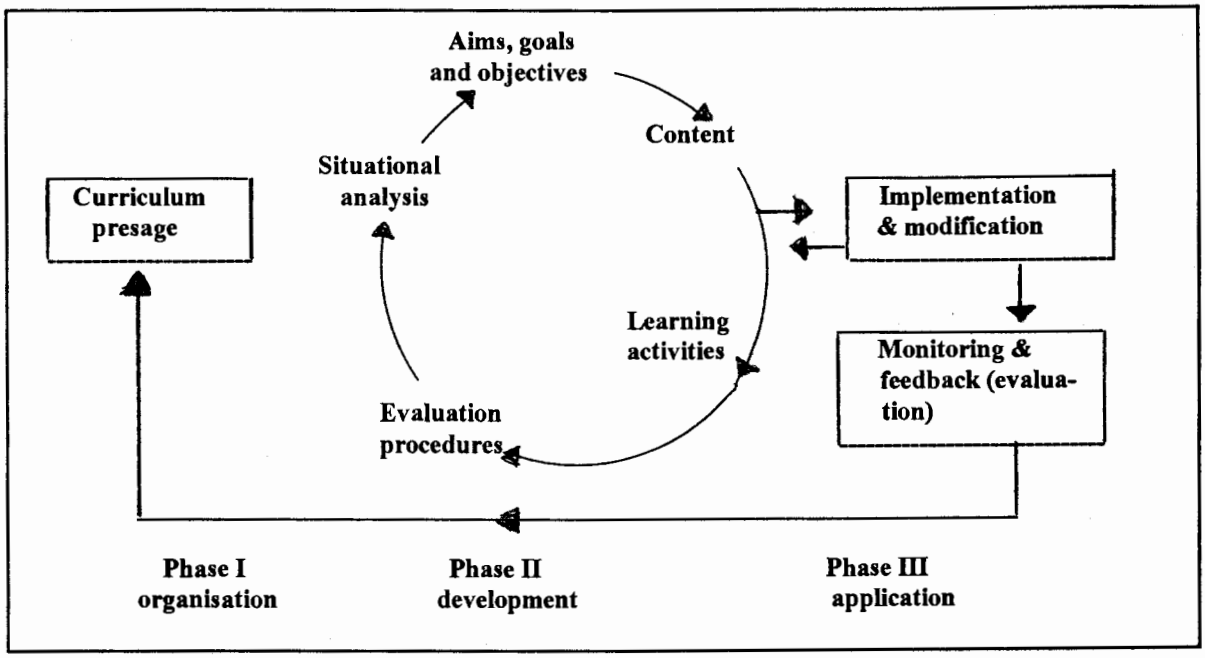
Logic dictates that taking either extreme in the selection of the model to adopt would be futile for this study since it would remove any flexibility in approach. The model to be adopted for the study has to be **rational** yet **flexible**. The model that fits these criteria and is therefore being

adopted for this study is basically a **cyclical model**. The structure of this cyclical model is adapted from Print's model which is depicted in figure 2.11.

**FIGURE 2.11**

## THE CYCLICAL MODEL ADOPTED FOR THE STUDY

**(Print 1989: 42)**




Print's model has three phases:

- Phase One is organisation
- Phase Two is development
- Phase Three is application.

For the purposes of this study, while phase one and two will form the **core** of the study, phase three will be modified to include recommendations for the application of the developed curriculum. The study thus focuses primarily on the *formulation* of the **curriculum document** and ends with *recommendations* for the **adoption** and **application** of the document.

## 2.7 RESUMÉ

In chapter two, the conceptual framework for the development of the teaching practice curriculum for teacher education in Zimbabwe was discussed. This involved identifying **aims of education** and how they influence curriculum theory and curriculum development. It also involved the discussion of the **conceptualisation of curriculum phenomena, foundations** of curricula as well as **models** of curriculum development.

The stage was then set for the selection and discussion of the curriculum development model which is to be used in this study. The model that has been adopted for this study is a **cyclical model** which is a compromise between the *classical rational* or *objectives* model on one extreme and the *dynamic* or *interactive* model on the other extreme. It has three phases;

- the **first** is **organisation** which involves curriculum presage, a conceptualisation stage that precedes formal curriculum development.
- the **second** is **development** which involves the actual development of the curriculum through the cyclical model of:
    - situational analysis
    - aims, goals and objectives
    - content
    - learning activities, and
    - evaluation.
- the **third** and final phase **application** will, for the purposes of this study, focus on **recommendations** for the **adoption** of the teaching practice curriculum that is being developed.

In the next chapter a conceptualisation of the teaching practice curriculum will receive attention.

# CHAPTER THREE

# THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM

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## THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter two a conceptual framework for curriculum development in general was examined. This resulted in the adoption of a **cyclical model** of curriculum development as a basis for this study. This chapter focuses on the conceptualisation of the teaching practice curriculum. The philosophical rationale for the teaching practice curriculum is examined. In this regard the broad development of philosophical foundations of teaching practice are scrutinized. Theoretical contexts of the teaching practice curriculum are also illuminated. The chapter concludes with the adoption of a structural framework for the teaching practice curriculum that will be used as a basis for the development of a proposed teaching practice curriculum for teacher education in Zimbabwe.

### 3.2 THE PLACE OF TEACHING PRACTICE IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Teachers are **educated** and **trained** to practice. Teaching is manifested in practice. It is therefore not surprising that teacher education can be broadly divided into two components that are wholly integrated; the **theory** of teacher education and the **practice** of teaching. The theory the students study is meant to illuminate the practice. Pearson (1989: 1) observes that when we begin to look at teacher education the issues of **theory** and **practice** begin to loom large. This is so because traditionally it has been expected that through teacher education the intending teacher would take the **knowledge** presented, which is often **theoretical** and apply it in **classroom practice.** According to Fish (1989: 58) there has been a deep-seated and negative reaction in the teaching profession against the whole idea of **theory** stemming from the notion that theory in teacher education involving the college-based study of foundation disciplines of

education is irrelevant. The reason for the persistence of this *negative* view of **theory** in teacher education is, as Fish (1989: 57) observes, due to the fact that most members of the teaching profession have not been made aware of the *extensive* changes in the *thinking* about **theory** and its *relationship* to **practice** in the training institutions that has taken place in the last ten years or so. As Fish (1989: 58 - 59) aptly puts it: "They have not been made privy to those *new views* of **theory** which place the practitioner at *the heart* of **theory** and turn **research** into the *handmaid* rather than the *frustrated taskmaster* of **practice**. There has been, in recent years, a shift towards an emphasis on the **practice** of teaching at the expense of the traditional educational theory. Fish (1989: 21), acknowledging this shift, points out that the arguments for it are not that academic theory be discarded in favour of practice, but that all practical perspectives which enable students to *understand* and *relate* successfully to, and to provide valid educational experience for, pupils are a vital part of teacher training. In the United Kingdom this shift in emphasis in the relationship of theory and practice has resulted in school-based teacher education initiatives and a closer **partnership** between teachers' colleges and schools in the education and training of teachers. Tomlinson (1995: viii) comments in this regard:

> *"It is surely no exaggeration to say that in the U K we stand at another significant watershed in the history of teacher preparation, which is also being reflected in a number of other countries. Doubtless for a multiplicity of often competing motives, the move is towards* ***school-based*** *courses and the involvement of teachers in the preparation of entrants to their own profession"* (own emphasis).

The relationship of theory and practice in teacher education programmes is still one of the perennial problems of teacher education. A brief examination of this relationship follows as it has a bearing on the development of the teaching practice curriculum.

## 3.2.1 The theory-practice relationship in teacher education

### *3.2.1.1 Practice as applied science*

One way of viewing the theory-practice relationship in teacher education is to view **practice as applied science**. This is the view philosophically developed by O'Conner (Pearson 1989: 4). In explaining O'Conner's exposition of practice as applied science, Pearson (1989: 4) uses the often cited analogy of the practice of medicine, which is that the practice of a medical doctor is informed by the theory of the biological sciences. In the same way, therefore, the practice of teaching is informed by educational theory.

Professor Wragg (1984) criticised this notion of the relationship of theory and practice which in the sixties saw students being given courses of lectures in history, philosophy, psychology and sociology of education which he argued was equivalent to giving trained surgeons a course of lectures on the history, philosophy and mechanics of surgery and then turning them loose in the operating theatre, each twirling a scalpel, hoping the lectures would inform their incisions (Graves 1990: 59). This was Wragg's exaggerated way of making the important point that the **immediate relevance** of courses in the so-called foundation disciplines of education was not always clearly related to the tasks the trainee teachers had to undertake during their teaching practice.

Pearson (1989: 6) identified the following three limitations of viewing practice as applied science within the teacher education context. First, a theory of education conceptualized in this manner excludes **value** and **normative** claims yet in the field of education, **normative claims** are prominent. The second limitation is that an educational theory is not necessary for the practice of education. As Pearson put it, "The practice of education was not only established, but was quite effective, before there was any scientific theory of education" (1989: 6). The third limitation is the limited support the sciences are able to provide to the practice of education.

### *3.2.1.2 Normative theory of education*

The normative theory of education was developed by Paul Hirst. In his exposition of the **theory-practice relationship in teacher training** Hirst uses as his point of departure the questions: *What kind of theory is it that properly determines what teachers do; how do we know it is rationally defensible and how exactly is it employed in the immediacies of day-to-day practice?* (1990: 74)

In answer to these questions Hirst (1990: 74 - 75) identifies two approaches that have dominated teacher education until recently. There is the **traditionalist** approach which sees the activities of teaching developing *directly* through practice. The theory that informs professionally competent teaching is the product of the world of teaching itself. From this traditionalist view teaching as a professional activity can be mastered only by immediate involvement in the job under the direction of a proficient practitioner. This is done through the process of **apprenticeship**. According to Hirst (1990: 76) the master in charge of the apprentice will need to have a grasp of the theory of teaching otherwise he would merely be a model to copy. This theory originated from relevant achievements of philosophy, psychology, sociology and other appropriate disciplines. According to this traditional view of the theory-practice relationship, the immediate theory that informs the practice of an individual teacher is a set of **concepts, beliefs** and **principles** that have been developed *independently* of practice itself (Hirst 1990: 77).

Moving away from the traditional view of the theory-practice relationship, Hirst (1990: 82 - 83) suggests that successful practice and its theory are necessarily generated in practice itself no matter what area we are concerned with. This Pearson (1989: 43) sees as a rejection by Hirst of his earlier conception of educational theory as a combination of applied science, applied history and applied philosophy, that is, taking philosophy of education, history of education, educational psychology and sociology of education and applying their findings to educational practice. Hirst now concedes that educational theory must begin with **practice** rather than the **foundation disciplines**. According to this new position of Hirst (1990: 82) it is by practical experiment in teaching, by trial and error, that specific ends and means of successful practice are generated. This is reminiscent of Schon's (1988) theory on the education of the **reflective practitioner**.

Hirst (1990: 83) just like Schon (1988) does advocate that teachers must constantly **reflect** *critically* on their personal practice and their justification in comparison with other newer practices and their claims. This critical reflection, Hirst (1990: 83 - 84) suggests is based on the practices and practical theory emerging experimentally in educational studies. Hirst, (1990: 84) sums up his new conception of the theory-practice relationship in teaching thus:

> *"What is being suggested in this approach to the professional activities of teaching is that they involve the teachers' mastery of a body of established and developing practices as in the traditionalist approach. But unlike the traditionalist approach, because of the nature and justification of these practices the individual teacher is seen to need an explicit understanding of the practices and the practical theory that informs them so as to be able to reflect critically on their significance for his or her own practice".*

Hirst's exposition of the theory-practice relationship needs to be taken into account in the development of the teaching practice curriculum that is proposed in this study. It clearly shows the significance of the contribution of the foundation disciplines in the educational theories and practices that have evolved as well as the significance of the emerging view and practice of training the practitioner on the job and making it possible for him to develop a theory of practice as he is learning the teaching profession.

### *3.2.1.3 Reflective practice*

Donald A. Schon has come up with an epistemology of practice that can be termed **reflective practice**. His epistemology is well espoused in his work **"Educating the Reflective Practitioner: 1988"**. It is worth pointing out here that reflective practice is the latest trend in teacher education development and a more detailed exposition of it will be done in the latter sectors of this chapter. Schon's concern is that the traditional epistemology of professional practice, that of applied science, is unable to account adequately for the work of a professional practitioner. On the other hand, he does not want to align himself with radical critiques of professions which accord them no special knowledge. To avoid these two types of mistakes he develops an epistemology of **reflective practice**, provides examples of how it can be displayed

in a variety of professions and discusses the general implications for the professions if reflective practice were to be the norm (Pearson 1982: 9).

The impact of the concept of reflection in teacher education today is aptly described by Zeichner (1992: 161 - 162), another major proponent of reflective teacher education, when he states:

> *"Along with the growing influence in educational research of cognitive psychology and interpretive sociological and anthropological perspectives (e.g. Reilly 1989; Erikson 1986), the subsequent and predictable growth in studies of teacher thinking (Clark 1988) and increased interest in and respect for the practical theories of teachers (e.g. Elbaz 1983) the term* ***reflection*** *has become a slogan around which teacher educators all over the world have rallied in the name of teacher education reform. In addition to efforts in the United States to make reflective inquiry the central component of teacher education program reforms (e.g. Cruickshank 1987; Waxman et al 1988; Clift, Houston and Pugach 1990; Tabachnick and Zeichner 1991), we have seen similar efforts in such countries as the United Kingdom (e.g. Lucas 1988; Ashcroft and Griffiths 1989; Pollard and Taun 1987); Australia (Gore 1987; Robottom 1988; Martinez 1989); and continental Europe e.g. Korthagen 1985; Altrichter 1988; Handal and Laiwas 1989)"* (own emphasis).

Schon (1988: 13) summarized the premises on which his epistemology of reflective practice is founded as follows:

- Inherent in the practice of the professionals recognized as *unusually competent* is a **core of artistry**.
- **Artistry** is an exercise of intelligence, a kind of knowing, though different in crucial respects from our standard model of professional knowledge. We can learn about artistry by carefully studying the performance of unusually competent performers.
- In the terrain of professional practice, applied science and research-based technique occupy a critically important though limited territory, bounded on several sides by artistry. There are *an art* of problem framing, *an art* of implementation and *an art* of improvisation - all necessary to mediate the use in practice of applied science and technique (own emphasis).

Schon (1988: 17) also suggested how **professional artistry** can be learnt when he pointed out that learning all forms of professional artistry depends, at least in part, on freedom to **learn by doing** in a setting **relatively low in risk** with access to coaches who **initiate** students into the

traditions of the profession and **help** them by the **right kind of telling** *to see* on their own behalf and in their own way what they need most *to see*.

Schon's exposition of **reflective practice** is in opposition to the notion of **technical rationality** which, he describes as the dominant view in the education and preparation of professionals. Pearson (1989: 27) explains technical rationality as follows:

> *Technical rationality says that there is agreement on the ends, the question of how one ought to act can be reduced to instrumental questions of what means are best suited to the achievement of the end. ---- problems are solved by the application of scientific theory and techniques. The professional's task, when faced with a problem, is to draw upon the scientific base of the field to devise a solution. Technical rationality is characterized by presenting knowledge as being 'specialized, firmly bounded, scientific and standardized".*

Schon identifies three problems with the model of technical rationality that make it unsuitable as a general epistemology of practice. First, a survey of the work of professionals shows that often the problems they face are *complex, uncertain, unstable, unique* or *present value conflicts.* The solution to these problems is at variance with technical rationality which requires that knowledge be *specialized, firmly bounded, scientific* and *standardized.* Second, the model of technical rationality ignores the issue of *problem setting.* However, in the work of the professional the first task that needs to be done is to *determine the problem* to be solved. Often this is the most difficult and recalcitrant part of a practitioner's work. The third problem, is that the model of technical rationality assumes that there is *no value conflict* and that there are *no competing paradigms of practice.* As a result of these problems inherent in the model of technical rationality Schon concludes that it fails to portray the **nature of knowledge** found in **professional practice** (Pearson 1989: 29).

In his alternative epistemology, Schon (1988: 22) explains how **artistry** is taught through **reflection-in-action**. In order to explain reflection-in-action, Schon (1988: 25) starts by coining and defining the term **knowing-in-action** which refers "to the sorts of *know-how* we reveal in our intelligent action - publicly observable, physical performances like riding a bicycle and private operations like instant analysis of a balance sheet. In both cases the **knowing** *is in the action.* We reveal it by *spontaneous, skillful* execution of the performance; and we are

characteristically unable to make it verbally explicit" (Schon 1988: 25). According to Schon (1988: 25) it is sometimes possible by *observing* and *reflecting* on our knowing-in-action to describe it by, for example, referring to the *sequences* of **operations** and **procedures** we execute, the *clues* we **observe** and the *rules* we follow or the **values, strategies** and **assumptions** that make up our **theories** of action. This is Schon's reference to **theory of practice**. Schon (1988: 25 is quick to explain that whatever language we employ, our descriptions of **knowing-in-action** are always *constructions*, attempts to put into explicit, symbolic form, a kind of intelligence that begins by being **tacit** and **spontaneous**.

**Knowing-in-action** leads to **reflection-in-action** as we think back and construct verbally or symbolically our intelligent actions. According to Schon (1988: 26) reflection-in-action occurs when our knowing-in-action results in an unexpected result which can be an *error* or an ***unusual*** result. This forces us to *reflect* on our *routine* actions. Schon (1988: 26) identified three types of reflection-in-action which are; thinking back on what one has done to discover how knowing-in-action may have contributed to an unexpected outcome - this being done *after* that fact in *tranquillity* or during the action by pausing to think about the action - or one can reflect in the midst of action without interrupting it and the thinking serves to *reshape* what is being done while *doing* it.

A summary of the whole cycle of reflection-in-action according to Schon (1988: 28 - 29) is as follows:

- To begin with there is a situation of action which results in *spontaneous routinised* responses which reveal **knowing-in-action** that may be described in terms of *strategies, understandings* of phenomena and ways of framing a **task** or **problem** appropriate to the situation.
- **Routine** responses produce a *surprise* - an *unexpected outcome* - pleasant or unpleasant, that does not fit the *categories* of knowing in action.
- Surprise leads to **reflection** within an *action - present* which is conscious but which does not necessarily occur in the medium of words.
- **Reflection-in-action** has a *critical* function, questioning the assumptional structure of **knowing-in-action**.

- Reflection gives rise to *on-the-spot* experiment which can work in that it yields *intended results* or may produce *surprises* that call for further **reflection**.

Pearson rightly contends that it is the ability to **reflect** while one is performing an action that lies at the base of Schon's epistemology. Graves (1990: 63) interprets reflection-in-action as a *continuing adjustment* to **feedback resulting from action**.

The final concepts of Schon's epistemology of practice are **knowing-in-action** and **reflection-in-practice** which relates to the **knowledge and reflection** exhibited by a professional practitioner. According to Schon (1988: 33) a professional's **knowing-in-action** is embedded in **knowing-in-practice** which is exercised in the institutional settings particular to the profession, organised in terms of its characteristic units of activity and its familiar types of practice situations and *constrained* or *facilitated* by its common body of professional knowledge and its appreciative system. A professional's **reflection-in-action** is really **reflection-in-practice** in those instances where the routine application of facts, rules and procedures derived from the body of professional knowledge fails to give the desired or expected results or comes up with a surprising unusual result. According to Schon (1988: 35) the reflection-in-action of a professional practitioner results in **professional artistry** which plays a central role in the description of **professional competence.**

Graves (1990: 63) contends that the view of **professional knowledge** as **artistry** involves a shift from an *objectivist* to a *constructivist* view of practice. He then makes the observation that this shift makes critically important terms such as **truth** and **effectiveness** problematic as they cannot be applied to every situation but are only relevant to the particular context or frame under consideration. In his consideration of the relation of **theory** and **practice** in education within Schon's conceptualization of the **reflective practitioner**, Pearson (1989: 39) concludes that although Schon does not speak directly about the relation of theory and practice, he is certainly *motivated* by problems he identifies that exist in the dominant accounts concerning how research or theory-based knowledge is utilised by practitioners.

Pearson (1989: 39) acknowledges that the first task in reflective practice is the formulation of the problem. That being the case, the well prepared teacher will have a great deal of **knowledge**

and abilities to use when problems arise that call for **reflective-in-action**. The reflective teacher will have a repertoire of categories, examples, exemplars, images and the like to call upon in solving the problem at hand which he or she would have formulated. The reflective teacher will also have a sense of **judgement** to determine whether an outcome is an affirmation or negation of the hypothesis. To do this, he or she needs to determine if the outcome is indeed a result of an intervention, if the result is the one desired, and if other unintentional outcomes of an action are indeed desirable. This is a rather sophisticated judgement involving abilities **to observe**, to see the **implications** of a conceptual framework and to make **appropriate judgements of value**.

Graves (1990: 64) discerns Schon's influence about the reflective practitioner in Joan Soloman (1987) when she makes direct reference to Schon in an article which argues that neither the theory-led nor the apprenticeship model of teacher education is totally adequate for the task of the professional preparation of teachers.

According to Soloman (Graves 1990: 64):

- the practitioner's craft knowledge needs to be made articulate and communicated to students.
- students need to develop the life-long habit of **reflection-in-action** and to recognize that the knowledge obtained is situationally dependent;
- such knowledge can be enhanced by inputs from appropriate disciplines; and
- **reflection** also involves a temporary withdrawal from the 'hurly-burly' classroom practice (own emphasis).

It is clear from what Soloman says that **reflective practice** is based on **expert knowledge** and **skill**. Therefore teacher education programs that are *effective* will enhance their students' knowledge through components of the course, the relevant knowledge emanating from the related disciplines and the practice of teaching itself; make it possible for students to learn, practise and develop the teaching skills and competencies; because it is the **knowledge base** and the **technical skills** the students possess that will determine the **quality** of the students' **reflective practice**.

In developing the proposed teaching practice curriculum it is necessary to take cognisance of these historical developments in the theory-practice relationship in teacher education. There is also a need to articulate and conceptualise the *prevailing* relationship between **theory** and **practice** in teacher education which, while acknowledging the contributions of the **foundation disciplines** to the practice of education, views theory as emanating from practice as well as leading to practice (Fish 1989: 61).

## 3.3 THEORETICAL CONTEXTS OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM

Developmental trends in teacher education have resulted in discernible theoretical contexts for the teaching practice curriculum. An understanding of these theoretical contexts that have a historical evolution is pertinent to appreciate the theoretical rationale and basis of the teaching practice curriculum being developed in this study. Zeichner's (1992: 161 - 166) typology and classification of these developmental trends have been adopted.

Zeichner (1992: 162) came up with these developmental trends while examining development in **reflective teaching practice**. In his classification of **traditions of practice** in teacher education, the **theoretical context** of teaching practice is discernible within each tradition as well as in the way in which earlier trends influenced later reforms. Four traditions or classifications were identified by Zeichner (1992: 163). These are the academic, social efficiency, developmentalist and social reconstructionist traditions. A brief discussion of these traditions to show how they reflect the theoretical context of the teaching practice curriculum follows.

### 3.3.1 The academic tradition

This orientation to teacher education which originated before formal programmes of teacher education were in existence, emphasizes the teacher's *role* as a **scholar** and subject **specialist**. The theoretical context of the teaching practice curriculum within the academic tradition is a

*classical liberal* education which used to be *equivalent* to being prepared for teaching before the establishment of teachers' colleges. Zeichner (1992: 163) maintains:

> *"As programmes for the preparation of both elementary and secondary teachers became established in colleges and universities, the point of view persisted that* ***sound liberal arts education*** *complemented by an* ***apprenticeship experience*** *in a school, was the most sensible way to prepare teachers for their work"* (own emphasis).

Zeichner (1992: 163) points out that the **academic tradition** of reform in the twentieth century United States teacher education has historically emphasized the *role* of the **liberal** and **disciplinary knowledge** in teacher preparation and with the exception of *clinical experiences* has *belittled* the contribution of schools, colleges and departments of education (own emphasis).

Aldrich (1990: 12 - 24) gives a parallel development when he traces the evolution of teacher education in Britain. Aldrich states: "For much of English history the accepted method of preparation for holding the post of teacher or master in a grammar or public school, many private establishments, and indeed in the university itself was a masters degree from the universities of Oxford or Cambridge". This is the **academic tradition** of teacher education as espoused by Zeichner (1992: 163). Aldrich (1990: 130) observes that such a qualification bore testimony to the recipient's *competence* in **subject matter study** rather than to his or her *ability to impart that matter to others.* Within the academic tradition of teacher education therefore, the theoretical context of the teaching practice curriculum is the **academic study** and **apprenticeship** which gives the student a chance to practise the **academic** and **educational** theory in the classroom.

### 3.3.2 The social efficiency tradition

According to Zeichner (1992: 162) the social efficiency tradition in teacher education has historically emphasized faith in the **scientific study of teaching** to provide a basis for the building of a **teacher education curriculum**. Zeichner (1992: 162) states: "According to contemporary advocates of this view, **research on teaching** has, in recent years provided a *'knowledge'* that can form the **foundation** for a teacher education curriculum (e.g. Goodman

1990)" (own emphasis). Two interpretations of the social efficiency perspective: the **technical** and the **deliberative** versions, have emerged amongst contemporary teacher educators. The technical version which is *narrow* in its orientation identifies **skills** and **competencies** which research has shown to be *associated* with desirable pupil outcomes and *teaches* these to prospective teachers. The deliberative orientation which is the *broader* interpretation is one where research findings on teaching are used together with other information to solve teaching problems.

The social efficiency tradition relates to the *conceptualisation* of **educational theory** as *scientific* (discussed in paragraph 3.2.1.1). A major feature of the social efficiency tradition in teacher education has been the **competency-based teacher education** (C B T E) also known as **performance-based teacher education** (P B T E), which specifies the **competencies** to be *demonstrated* by the student which are made *explicit* by the **criteria** to be applied in **assessing** the student's competencies and therefore holds the student *accountable* for meeting those criteria (Turney *et al* 1977: 16).

The theoretical context of the teaching practice curriculum within the social efficiency tradition in teacher education is thus the **scientific study of teaching** which leads to the development of an educational knowledge base as foundation for teacher education. This knowledge base leads to the identification of **teaching competencies** as reflected in competency-based teacher education programmes that result in teaching practice curricula that are **competency** or skill based, developed in *systematic* and *rigorous* **simulated** and **real** class situations. The simulated approaches include **micro-teaching** as well as **peer teaching**.

### 3.3.3 The developmentalist tradition

According to Zeichner (1992: 165) the distinguishing characteristic of the **developmentalist tradition** is the assumption that the natural development of the learner provides the basis for determining **what** should be taught to students and **how** it should be taught. According to Perrone (1989) as cited by Zeichner (1992: 165), three metaphors have been associated with the progressive/developmentalist tradition in United States teacher education: the teacher as a

**naturalist**, the teacher as a **researcher**, and the teacher as an **artist**. Zeichner (1992: 164) elaborates thus:

> *"The teacher as **naturalist** dimension has stressed the importance of skill in the observation of students' behaviour and in building a curriculum and classroom environment consistent with patterns of child development and children's interests. The teacher as **researcher** strand of this tradition has emphasized the need to foster the teacher's experimental attitude toward practice and to help teachers initiate and sustain ongoing inquiries in their own classrooms. Finally, the teacher as **artist** element has emphasized the link between creative and fully functioning persons in touch with their own learning and exciting and stimulating classrooms"* (own emphasis).

**Humanistic teacher education** is a typical example of the **developmentalist tradition**. It was proposed as a *reaction* to and *an alternative* to **competency-based teacher education** which was identified as a major exemplification of the **social efficiency tradition**. Proponents of humanist teacher education such as Arther Combs strongly criticized competency-based teacher education for being *inhuman* and *dehumanising* the teacher education process (Turney *et al* 1977: 18) However Atkin and Rattis (1974) cited in Turney *et al* (1977: 18) observed that the differences between the proponents of competency-based teacher education and those of humanistic teacher education were not so much on *an understanding of how the programmes operated*, but largely on the issue of the *metaphor employed to describe the operation*. Turney *et al* (1977: 18) stated in this regard:

> *"Competency-based programmes tend to use an **industrial metaphor** referring to such things as input, products, performance skills, modules, feedback and so on. Humanistic educators are **repelled** by such language and the concept of the educational process it suggests".*

**Humanistic** teacher education emphasizes *personal development* rather than *how to teach, personal attitudes, beliefs* and *understanding* rather than *teaching behaviours* (Turney *et al* 1977: 18). While **competency-based** teacher education emphasizes *technical teaching skills*, **humanistic** teacher education stresses the *human attributes*. Essential elements of **humane teacher education** have been identified as *personal experience*, greater *individualization of instruction* and *field experience* (Turney *et al* 1977: 30). This comparison of the competency-based teacher education as an example of the social efficiency tradition in teacher education and

humanistic teacher education does reveal that the two approaches *would* and *can* result in a *well rounded* and *effective* teacher, if used as a base of a teacher education programme in general and a teaching practice curriculum in particular.

The theoretical context of the teaching practice curriculum within the developmentalist tradition is the **personal development** of the student. Within this theoretical context the teaching practice curriculum is built on the *premises* of the teacher as a **naturalist, researcher** and **artist**.

### 3.3.4 The social reconstructionist tradition

The social reconstructionist tradition views **schooling** and teacher education as *crucial elements* in the movement toward a more *just* and *humane* society (Zeichner 1992: 166). The theoretical context of the teaching practice curriculum within the social reconstructionist tradition is **reflective practice** whose fundamental and pervasive goal is the *reconstruction* of society. Such themes as **democracy** and **emancipation** feature in teacher education programmes with an orientation of social reconstruction.

Since reflective teacher education is currently the major focus of teacher education reform it will be examined in more detail. Proponents of reflective teacher education have offered very persuasive arguments on its *effectiveness* in the education, training and development of teachers for our technological world. In this regard Tom (1992: viii) makes the following claim:

> *"We teacher educators are, I believe, in the midst of a revolution of how we view the nature of teaching and, therefore* ***teacher education****. Gone are the days in which we presumed that the results from research on teaching would unlock the secrets of* ***effective teaching*** *and eventually yield* ***prescribed skills*** *or* ***teaching behaviours*** *for the* ***professional curriculum****, even though researchers on teaching continue to talk as if their work does provide a 'knowledge base' for the professional curriculum (e.g. Good 1990). The contribution of systematic research on teaching to the teacher education curriculum will likely be more* ***indirect*** *and context-specific than researchers have envisioned"* (own emphasis).

Reflective teacher education is seen as the answer to this predicament facing teacher education.

### *3.3.4.1 The concepts of reflection, reflective teaching and reflective teacher education*

The concept of **reflection** as it describes teaching originates from the thinking of John Dewey (1904, 1933) who suggested that the primary purpose of teacher preparation should be to help preservice teachers become **'reflective practitioners'** (Goodman 1992: 174). This is how Richert (1992: 188) describes Dewey's concept of reflection:

> *"Dewey's (1933) notion of **reflective teaching** and **teaching as learning** emphasizes the **intellectual demands** of work, which is **action-based in thought**. According to Dewey, teachers determine the **purposes** and **consequences** of their work so that what they do represents what they **believe** and **know**. In the process of **reflective practice** teachers become **'students of education'** who can act with intent as they responsibly examine the many complex aspects of their classroom practice. As teachers examine their practice and thus learn about themselves and their work, they construct **knowledge** about **teaching** and their **work as teachers**"* (own emphasis).

While most authorities on reflection use the *descriptive* term of **reflective** practice, teaching, or teacher education (e.g. Dewey 1904, 1933; Schon 1983), Berlak and Berlak (1981) cited by Ciriello, Valli and Taylor (1992: 100) define **reflection** as the ability *to stand apart* from self in order to *examine* critically one's actions and the context of those actions. The purpose of such a stance is to facilitate efforts to **think** and to **act** from conviction based on **professional knowledge** rather than simply functioning because of **habit, tradition** or **impulse**. Ciriello et al (1992: 100 -101) refer to Valli (1990) who sees such a **reflective orientation** as including the following: relating theory and experience-based knowledge to practice; analysing one's own teaching and the school context for the purpose of effecting change; viewing a situation from multiple perspectives; seeing alternatives to and consequences of one's actions; and understanding the broad social and moral embeddedness of teaching.

According to Calderhead (1992: 145) Van Manen defines reflection at three different levels: **technical rationality**, which is concerned with the efficient application of knowledge to achieve accepted goals; **practical action**, which involves consideration of the values implicit in alternative actions and their consequences; and **critical reflection**, which concerns the ethical and moral dimensions of educational practices. These three levels can be seen as hierarchical.

A teacher needs to be able to operate *efficiently or effectively* on a lower level before he or she is able to operate on the next level. Technical rationality is tested by the quality of knowledge-base and its application. It is reminiscent of a technician who is a "Mr Fixit", knowing the **what** but not necessarily the **why** of the problem. One can also point out that it is an experienced teacher, well grounded in technical rationality and practical action who can confidently argue and debate ethical, moral and political dimensions of educational practice, who operates at the critical reflective level.

Valli (1992: 213) stresses the basic premise that **reflection** is a **conceptual orientation** and points out that other authorities [Sparks - Langer (1992), Zeichner (1992) and Goodman (1992)] accept this basic premise. Valli (1992: 215) identifies two benefits in viewing reflection as a conceptual orientation. Arguing that limiting programme goals to one way of **knowing** or one type of **content** seriously distorts the **practical reality of teaching**, Valli (1992: 215) sees the first benefit of viewing reflection as a conceptual orientation in that reflection has the capacity to bring together aspects of teaching which other orientations separate, leaving teacher education unnecessarily and impractically restrictive. Valli (1992: 215) asks; "Do we really want teachers to be expert only in (or even primarily in) the subject areas they teach, as in the **academic paradigm** ? Or do we want them to draw solely, or primarily, from **personal experience** in their reflection, ignoring other forms of potentially useful knowledge, as in the **practical paradigm**?" (own emphasis). Then she comments:

> *"Only a **reflective paradigm**, it seems to me, has the power to integrate essential components of teaching. As Doyle (1990) recognizes in his typology, reflective teachers draw upon personal, craft, propositional and theoretical knowledge".*

Valli (1992: 215) identifies the second benefit in viewing reflection as a conceptual orientation as that reflective capacities in student teachers might not be addressed at all in the other orientations. She states, "Without an explicit commitment to reflection in program goals, and faculty dialogue about achieving those goals, a 'disposition toward reflection' is not likely to be more than sporadic or superficial" (Valli 1992: 215 - 216).

On **reflective teaching**, Sparks - Langer (1992: 147) states, "The exact meaning of the term **'teacher reflection'** is difficult to pin down. Most who use the term would probably agree that the opposite of **reflective action** is the *mindless* following of **unexamined practices** or **principles**. But within that agreement, there is quite a range of opinion regarding what reflection is and what it looks like in action. Thus, reflection has no one definition; it is perceived in the eye of the beholder" (own emphasis). Simply explained however, **reflective teaching** is teaching that is guided or embedded in reflection as already defined and explained. Reflective teaching as Dewey (1933) pointed out (Richert 1992: 188) emphasizes the intellectual demands of work, which is action based in thought.

**Reflective teacher education** is founded on the concept of reflection and reflective teaching. It is that teacher education programme whose fundamental aim is to educate and train a reflective teacher. Reflective teacher education has developed largely as a response to the criticism that has been levelled at the technocratic orientation as popularised by the competency-based teacher education (Goodman 1992: 174).

According to Goodman (1992: 175) different definitions of **reflective teacher education** emerged as Dewey's notion of **reflective practice** was seen as the answer to the criticism of the technocratic orientation of teacher education. Goodman (1992: 175) cites Cruickshank (1981) and his colleagues who took a narrow interpretation of Dewey's work by having preservice teachers merely reflect on the 'success' of using specific instructional techniques to meet predetermined objectives. A broader definition of reflective teacher education according to Goodman (1992: 175) is one he quotes from Zeichner and Listone (1987: 23) which suggests "that teacher preparation should help preservice teachers 'reflect on the **origins, purposes** and **consequences** of their actions, as well as on the **material** and **ideological** constraints and encouragements embedded in the **classroom, school** and **societal contexts** in which they work'" (own emphasis). This broad definition of reflective teacher education supports Vaughan's (1990: x) notion that **technical skills, knowledge** and **behaviour** are all *essential elements* of **reflective practice**, but they do not compose its whole. **Value laden** issues such as **moral, ethical** and **political judgments** must be brought to bear at the local level on *what* is taught, to *whom* and *how*.

### *3.3.4.2 Perspectives on reflection*

Grimmet *et al* (1990: 23 - 35) discuss **perspectives** on reflection whereby they use the term perspective to denote a cluster of studies that possess similar epistemological commitments regarding the *roles* and *purposes* assigned to a **knowledge base** in the **reflective process.** They identified three perspectives to reflection as follows: reflection as *instrumental mediation of action*, reflection as *deliberating among competing views of teaching* and reflection as *reconstructing experience*.

*i)* *Reflection as instrumental mediation of action*

In this perspective, reflection is viewed as a process that leads to **thoughtful mediated action** usually involving the putting into practice of research findings and the theoretical formulation of education. Grimmet *et al* (1990: 23) point out that the purpose of reflection in this perspective is *instrumental* in that the reflective process is used to help teachers *replicate* classroom practices that empirical research has found to be *effective*. The knowledge source is usually that of an *external authority* such as educational researchers, journal articles and research tested theories of education rather than *actual situations of classroom practice*.

*ii)* *Reflection as deliberating among competing views of teaching*

In this perspective of reflective practice **educational events** are *examined in context* taking into account *competing versions* of good teaching. The mode of knowing is *deliberative* and knowledge about teaching is viewed as having a **relativistic quality**. The approach to reflection is termed **informed eclecticism** with research knowledge used not to *direct* practice but to *inform* it.

*iii)* *Reflection as reconstructing experience*

The main focus in this perspective to reflection is the **reconstruction** or **reorganisation** of experience. Basically what is reconstructed includes **action**

**situations, self-as- teacher** within the cultural milieu of teaching and **taken-for-granted assumptions about teaching**. According to Grimmet *et al* (1990: 27) for each of these aspects, the *source* of **knowledge** for reflection is found in both the **context** of the action setting and in the **practical application** of *personal* knowledge. The knowledge is used to *transform* practice.

The three *perspectives* on reflection illuminate the theoretical context of the teaching practice curriculum within the broad *orientation* of reflective teacher education. This theoretical context is further conceptualised by examining the *evolution* of traditions of reflection.

### *3.3.4.3 Traditions of Reflection*

Zeichner (1992: 161 - 168) discusses what he terms **traditions** of reflection in the United States of America. What he terms traditions could be viewed as **movements** or the **prevailing** or **predominant** practices of the period. These traditions of reflection discussed by Zeichner within the context of America, can be viewed as universal since they are based on the historical development of teacher education in the world.

*i) The academic tradition of reflection*

The **academic tradition** stresses the role of the **liberal arts** and **disciplinary knowledge** in teacher education. It emphasizes the teacher's role as a **scholar** and **subject matter specialist** (Zeichner 1992: 163). **Reflective practice** within the academic tradition emphasizes the teacher's *deliberations* about subject matter and its transformation to pupils to promote understanding.

*ii) The social efficiency tradition of reflection*

According to Zeichner (1992: 162) the **social efficiency tradition** of reform in United States teacher education has historically emphasised faith in the **scientific study of teaching** to provide a basis for building a teacher education curriculum. There are

two ways that the social efficiency tradition has been interpreted by contemporary teacher educators. The first is the **technological** version which emphasises teaching student teachers the *skills* and *competencies* which research has shown to be associated with **desirable pupil outcomes**. Reflection in this narrow interpretation of the social efficiency view is confined to how closely the practice of the teacher conforms to standards provided by some aspect of research on teaching. The second is a broader interpretation referred to as the **'deliberative orientation'** where findings of research on teaching are used by teachers along with other information *to solve problems.* The crucial task for teacher educators is to foster teachers' capabilities to exercise their **judgement** about the use of *various teaching skills* while taking advantage of **research, experience, intuition** and their own **values** (own emphasis).

*iii) The develomentalist tradition of reflection*

The distinguishing characteristic of the **developmentalist tradition** of teacher education is the assumption that the *natural development of the learner* provides the basis for determining **what** should be taught to students and **how** it should be taught. The developmental tradition views the teacher in three ways; as a **naturalist**, as a **researcher** and as **an artist**. While the developmentalist tradition does not ignore subject matter standards emanating from the disciplines, research on teaching and the social and political contexts of schooling and issues of social justice, the emphasis is clearly on **reflection about students and on one's own development as a teacher and person** (Zeichner 1992: 165).

*iv) The social reconstructionist tradition of reflection*

In a social reconstructionist tradition, schooling and teacher education are both viewed as crucial elements in the movement towards a more just and humane society. Zeichner (1992: 166 - 167) identifies the following three characteristics of reflective teaching in the social reconstructionist tradition. The first is that the teachers' attention is focused both *inwardly* at their own **practice** and *outwardly* at the **social conditions** in which these practices are situated with the reflection aimed in part at the

elimination of the social conditions which distort the selfunderstandings of teachers and undermine the educative potential and moral basis of schooling. The second characteristic is its **democratic** and **emancipatory impulse** and the focus of the teachers' deliberations upon substantive issues which raise instances of **inequality** and **injustice** within schooling and society for close scrutiny. The third characteristic is its commitment to reflection as a **communal** project. Zeichner (1992: 166) points out that social reconstructionist teacher educators seek to encourage the development of **'communities of learning'** where teachers can support and sustain each other's growth.

*v)* *Generic reflection*

In his description of what he terms generic reflection Zeichner (1992: 167) states:

> *"In addition to these four traditions of reflective practice in teaching and teacher education, there has recently been a great deal of advocacy for reflective teaching* ***in general*** *without much comment about what it is the reflection should be* ***focused on****, the* ***criteria*** *that should be used to evaluate the* ***quality*** *of the reflection or the* ***degree*** *to which teachers' deliberations should incorporate a critique of the social and institutional contexts in which they work. The implication here is that teachers actions are necessarily better just because they are more* ***deliberate*** *or* ***intentional****"* (own emphasis).

According to Valli (1990b: 9) quoted by Zeichner (1992: 167): **"How** to get students to reflect can take a life of its own, and become **the** programmatic goal. **What** they reflect on can become immaterial". Zeichner (1992: 167) points out in the conclusion of the discussion of the five different orientations of reflective practice that he is not suggesting that individual programmes of work can be labelled as **pure** examples of any of the orientations but that he is "suggesting though that teacher education programs will reflect *various patterns of resonance* with these **orientations** and that certain **emphases** and **absences** can be detected in any given set of programs or in the reflective teacher education movement as a whole in terms of these different orientations" (own emphasis).

The five orientations offer a theoretical context for the teaching practice curriculum within reflective teacher education. The orientations when taken together offer a **synthesis** of the development of teacher education and are thus a logical **conceptual context** of the teaching practice curriculum that is now being developed. An examination of approaches to teacher reflection is also necessary if one is to develop a teaching practice curriculum that is in harmony with and enhances reflection in student teachers.

### *3.3.4.4 Approaches to teacher reflection*

Sparks-Langer (1992: 147 - 152) presents the following three approaches to understanding teachers' reflective thinking; the cognitive approach, the critical approach and the narrative approach.

*i)* *The cognitive approach*

The cognitive approach includes studies of teachers' information processing and decision making. It focuses on how the teacher uses the knowledge in his decision making. It is worth pointing out that within the cognitive approach to reflection with its focus on knowledge and processes involved in teacher decision making, there are traces of Zeichner's description of the academic and the social efficiency traditions of teacher education and their modes of reflection.

*ii)* *The critical approach to reflection*

Sparks-Langer (Valli 1992: 149) points out that "While the cognitive approach emphasizes **how** teachers make decisions, the critical approach stresses the **what** of those decisions by examining the *experiences, values* and *goals* of teachers in terms of their socio-political implications. Critical reflection derives from the philosophical base of critical theory. The critical approach to reflection identified by Sparks-Langer relates to Zeichner's social reconstructionist tradition discussed earlier with its

emphasis on schooling and teacher education which are viewed as **crucial** elements in the movement towards a more just and humane society.

*iii) The narrative approach*

The narrative approach to reflection emphasizes the teachers' own descriptions of the **personal circumstances** under which they make decisions (Sparks-Langer 1992: 151). Sparks-Langer 1992: 151) states:

> *"Many terms and concepts are joined together in this view of reflection: wisdom of practice (Shulman 1987), craft knowledge (Leinhardt 1990)., art/aesthetics of teaching (Eisner 1982; Kagan 1988), teacher action research (Cochran-Smith and Lythe 1990), and narrative inquiry (Conelly and Clandinin 1990). The common thread through all these is the emphasis on the validity of teachers' inferences drawn from their own emphasis".*

This narrative approach to reflection described by Sparks-Langer is reminiscent of the concepts of **voice** and **power** in teaching and learning to teach discussed by Richert (1992: 187 - 197). The concept of voice originates from feminist pedagogy.

Goodman (1992: 177) postulates:

> *"Feminist pedagogy offers significant insight into the work of teaching. In spite of numerous calls to develop environments in which teachers can act as **autonomous** and **reflective** practitioners, the societal demands upon teachers **seriously undermine** this goal. In particular over the last two decades teachers have increasingly become **'deskilled'** (Apple 1986; Gitlin 1983; Goodman 1988; Frymier 1987; Shannon 1987). This deskilling of teachers occurs when the **conceptualization** of **instruction** and the **curriculum** is separated from those who actually teach. **Conventional** teaching has become increasingly **controlled** through the adoption of instructional programs which come complete with learning objectives, textbooks, assignments, tests and schedule. The teacher's role is to **manage** these programs so that the students finish them within the prescribed time period"* (own emphasis).

Richert (1992: 189) states, "The idea of teacher conversation has embedded within it the concept of **'voice'** - the use of language to *explain, describe, question, explore* or

*challenge*. As this mechanism of conversation and explanation, voice is critical to teacher education". Richert (1992: 189) identifies two aspects to the concepts of **voice**; voice and speaking one's truth and voice and being heard. Richert (1992: 189) in her discussion argues for drawing novice teachers into a **conversation** that causes them to **articulate** their points of view and thus reveal what they **know** and **believe** about **teaching** and **learning**. Reflective practice requires that teachers engage in this conversation. Therefore, programs preparing teachers for reflective teaching must include the opportunity for the development of the **knowledge** and **skills** for such a conversation. Richert (1992: 193) echoes the claims of Goodman (1992: 177 - 178) that the culture of the teaching profession denies teachers the chance of not only **speaking** their minds but also that of being **heard**. Richert (1992: 193) states in this regard:

> *"..... teachers aren't heard because they don't speak and they don't speak because they are part of a culture that **silences** them by a set of **oppressive mechanisms** such as overwork, low status, and an externally defined standard for performance - a similar set, incidentally which has oppressed women for generations. **Education locates expertise in teaching outside the teacher.** Curriculum guidelines, state mandates, university-based research, school and district policies and hierarchies, all contribute to a consistent message to teachers that the **primary source of knowledge** for their work comes not from them but from a source outside of them. "Being heard' as a description of teachers' experience in the work environment, represents a **revolutionary** position rather than a position that is normative in the profession".*

According to Richert (1992: 195) within teacher education, students need a variety of chances to meet, listen to one another and to **think aloud.** Oral presentations provide one example of how this might occur. Arguing that the socialization teachers receive as students before entering the profession is a process characterized by **a goal of remaining quiet rather than speaking**, Richert (1992: 194) advocates that student teachers must be encouraged to *speak* what they **know** and *hear* what they **speak**.

On the concept of power, Richert (1992: 196) points out that in feminist literature, voice and power are often linked by conceptualization that either explicitly states, or implicitly implies that claiming, experiencing and honouring one's voice **empowers**

the individual by putting her in contact with her own intelligence. She therefore argues that the same can be true of the teacher. She suggests that as teachers talk about their work and 'name' their experiences, they learn about what they know and what they believe. They also learn what they do not know. Such knowledge **empowers** the individual by providing a source for action that is generated from within rather than imposed from without. Richert (1992: 197) does acknowledge that given the reality of the typical school context, it may not be easy for teachers **empowered** through the mechanism of **voice** to act in accordance with what they **know** and **believe**. She therefore makes the following summation:

> *"If we are to envision a world of schooling that better meets the needs of our changing society, it is essential that we change our conception of* ***power*** *to be* ***inclusive*** *rather than* ***exclusive.*** *It is also essential that we prepare teachers to claim their voice and in so doing, claim access to their own power and consequently the potential for change"* (Richert 1992: 197).

### *3.3.4.5 Reflective teacher education: a synthesis*

The discussion of reflective teacher education has covered an explanation of the concept, traditions of reflection as well as approaches to reflection. To conclude the discussion the various threads are now drawn together in a synthesis centred on the concept of **good or effective teaching**. Linda Valli's (1992: 213 - 225) discussion of levels and models of reflection is used as a platform for this synthesis.

The first level of this synthesis identifies the two broad models of teacher education; technical rationality and reflective practice. The two models are shown in figure 3.1.

## FIGURE 3.1

## MODELS OF TEACHER PREPARATION
**(Valli 1992: 220)**

| | TECHNICAL RATIONALITY | | | REFLECTIVE PRACTICE | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Behavioural** | **Technical Decision Making** | **Reflection in Action** | **Deliberative** | **Personalistic** | **Critical** |
| **Quality of Reflection** | not applicable | matching performance to external guidelines | contextualising craft and propositional knowledge | weighting competing claims and viewpoints | hearning one's own voice | problematising the goals and purposes of schooling in the light of justice and other ethical criteria |
| **Content of Reflection** | *generic instruction and management behaviours derived from research on teaching | generic instruction and management behaviours derived from research on teaching | personal teaching performance | a range of teaching concerns | personal growth and relational growth | social and political dimensions of schooling |

While **technical rationality** had dominated teacher education programmes in the sixties and seventies, **reflective teacher education** re-emerged in the eighties to challenge technical rationality whose main feature was **competency-based teacher education**. While the models of technical rationality and reflective practice are two *contrasting* models of teacher education, the two models can be *synthesised* by viewing technical rationality as a historical stage in the development of fully fledged reflective teacher education. The other way of synthesizing the two contrasting models of teacher education is to view technical rationality as a level within a hierarchy of levels of reflective teacher education. This is reflected in figure 3.2 where the two stages of reflection within technical rationality which are **behavioural** and **technical** decisionmaking form the first and second levels of reflective teacher preparation.

**FIGURE 3.2**

# LEVELS OF REFLECTIVE TEACHER PREPARATION
**(Valli 1992: 221)**

| LEVEL | | QUALITY OF REFLECTION | CONTENT OF REFLECTION |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Reflective Practice** | 6. critical (social reconstructionist) | problematising the goals and purposes of schooling in light of justice and other ethical hearing | social and political dimensions of schooling |
| | 5. Personalistic (developmental, narrative) | hearing one's own voice | personal growth and relational issues |
| | 4. deliberative (social efficiency, cognitive) | weighing competing claims and viewpoints | a range of teaching concerns |
| | 3. reflection-in-action | contextualising craft and propositional knowledge | personal teaching performance |
| **Technical Rationality** | 2. technical decision making | matching performance to external guidelines | generic instruction and management behaviours derived from research on teaching |
| | 1. behavioural | not applicable | *generic instruction and management behaviours derived from research on teaching |

In contrasting technical rationality and reflective practice as models of teacher preparation, Valli (1992: 217) refers to the way **knowledge** is used to guide **practice** as the *quality* of reflection and the type of knowledge valued as *content* for reflection. In figure 3.1 therefore technical rationality has two aspects. The first is **behavioural** whose main concern is with **skill acquisition** and excludes any form of reflection. According to Valli (1992: 217) in behaviouristic teacher education programs, candidates would need to demonstrate adequate *teaching competency* based primarily on **effective teaching research** (own emphasis). The second aspect of technical rationality is **technical decisionmaking** during which performance is matched to external guidelines, prospective teachers are trained to judge their own performance (Valli 1992: 217). The content of reflection therefore includes generic instruction and management behaviours derived from research on teaching. As figure 3.1 indicates, reflective practice has four aspects to it: reflection in action, deliberative, personalistic and

critical, each with its **quality of reflection** (the way knowledge is used to guide practice) and the **content of reflection** (the type of knowledge valued).

The second level of synthesis is shown in figure 3.2 as the **level of reflective teacher preparation**. In explaining this synthesis Valli (1992: 217) proposes that there are six different ways in which **knowledge** is used to guide **practice** and that these different relations between knowledge and practice have implications for what type of knowledge and ultimately what type of teaching is valued. Valli's (1992: 222) explanation of figures 3.1 and 3.2 is embodied within the concept of **good teaching**. She states:

> *"The six approaches to good teaching and teacher preparation can be viewed in two ways: either as mutually exclusive visions of good teaching or as hierarchical qualities of good teachers. Table 1 (3.1.) captures the notion of opposing ideal types; table 2 (3.2) portrays the approaches as levels within a taxonomy with behavioural as the first and lowest level of* ***teaching competence*** *and critical as the sixth and highest. My own preference would be for* ***reflective teaching*** *models to adopt the latter perspective"* (own emphasis).

## 3.4 A PROPOSED TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM MODEL

So far in this chapter the focus has centred on **a theoretical frame of reference** for a teaching practice curriculum. The analysis started by focusing on the place of teaching practice in teacher education. Here the perennial problem of the relationship between *theory* and *practice* in teacher education was examined. The analysis then shifted to the **theoretical contexts** of the teaching practice curriculum. These were discussed within the *evolutionary* and *developmental* trends in teacher education, starting with the **academic tradition** up to **reflective practice**. Reflective teacher education was discussed in more detail as it is regarded as **an integrative approach** to teacher education and one which has great promise of resulting in an *efficient, self-confident* teacher who has been *empowered* to fulfil his social responsibility.

To conclude this chapter, a teaching practice curriculum model is proposed. The conceptualisation of the teaching practice curriculum developed thus far, together with this

teaching curriculum model being proposed, are to be used as the frames of reference in the development of a teaching practice curriculum for teacher education in Zimbabwe.

## 3.4.1 Principles underpinning the teaching practice curriculum model

The teaching practice curriculum model proposed in this study, is founded on the following basic principles:

### *3.4.1.1 The teaching practice curriculum has to be founded on a firm theoretical basis*

Du Plessis (1985: 346) also stressed this principle when she stated: "... it became increasingly clear that an effective curriculum needs to be grounded on a firm theoretical basis". The theoretical basis has three aspects to it:

- the **academic theory** taught and studied in the subject specialisations or subject(s);
- the **professional theory** taught and studied in educational foundation courses such as educational psychology, sociology, philosophy;
- the **practical theory** studied in methods or curriculum courses.

Turney *et al* (1985: 3) state the following on the issue of a theoretical underpinning of the teaching practice curriculum:

> *"If teaching is to become based on sound educational theory, then from the start, a close and strong inter-relationship must be forged between the ideas about teaching espoused by the teacher education programme and the experiences of student teachers in schools"* (own emphasis).

### *3.4.1.2 The teaching practice curriculum model should be built from clear educational intent, i.e. outcomes, aims and objectives.*

In this regard the two issues of curriculum **as a manipulative** strategy as well as the **pressures** exerted on curriculum planners which were examined in 2.1 have to be taken into account. The point here is that the **outcomes**, **aims** and **objectives** of the teaching practice curriculum will reflect the **manipulation** of national government or government and educational agencies. Also reflected in the outcomes, aims and objectives will be the *response* of teacher education to **social pressures** on the *type* or *quality* of teacher to be educated.

### *3.4.1.3 The content of the teaching practice curriculum should cover experiences both within the college and the school*

This necessitates a very close working relationship between colleges and schools.

### *3.4.1.4 The content of the teaching practice curriculum should include knowledge, skills andattitudes necessary for effective or good teaching*

### *3.4.1.5 The teaching practice curriculum should have, built into it, a supervision and assessment system based on a sound philosophical and theoretical rationale*

## 3.4.2 The structure of the teaching practice curriculum

The proposed teaching practice curriculum model has the following components:

- Outcomes, aims and objectives
- The Content
- The Supervision and Assessment strategies.

Each of these structures of the teaching practice curriculum is going to be discussed.

### *3.4.2.1 Outcomes, aims and objectives*

One of the major criticisms of teaching practice programmes over the years has been that most tend to have ambiguous outcomes, aims and/or objectives (Turney *et al* 1977: 35) and some take aims and objectives of teaching practice to be self-evident (Stones and Morris 1972: 14). Those programmes of teaching practice that have been successful or effective have been built on clear intent aims and well thought-out and expressed objectives. Competency-based teacher education or the technical rational approach has contributed positively to teacher education in this regard. The following are general guidelines on what an ideal set of teaching practice objectives should include (Ndlovu 1993: 43 - 44):

- Teaching practice sessions should be planned and executed from clearly articulated and comprehensive set of objectives.
- The objectives should be stated in behavioural terms making it possible for students, lecturers and teachers to assess their accomplishment or achievement.
- The objectives should have sufficient detail and be comprehensive enough so as to be meaningful.
- The objectives should be developmental and sequential.

Different institutions will state their outcomes, aims and objectives differently and there are bound to be different areas of stress and emphasis, especially depending on the theoretical or philosophical emphasis undergirding the teaching practice curriculum. While these variations are inevitable and in a way healthy, it is possible to lay basic guidelines on the content that needs to be included in the objectives. This content includes the following:

- There should be objectives on the theory-practice relationship.
- There should be objectives on the students' acquisition of teaching skills.
- There should be objectives on the students' learning about pupils and developing appropriate relationships with them.
- There should be objectives on the students' development of professional teacher attributes.

- There should be objectives on the students' development of desirable personality traits.
- There should be objectives on the students' development of reflective skills.

### *3.4.2.2 The content of the teaching practice curriculum*

Identifying the content for an ideal teaching practice curriculum is not an easy task. The content that is to be identified will therefore never be conclusive. What can be done with comparative ease though is classifying the content according to the **context** where it is going to be covered. It is also important to include within the discussion of the content of the teaching practice curriculum such issues as: its sequence, phases and timing.

The **contexts** of the teaching practice curriculum are the **college** and the **school**. It is at college that the student is prepared for teaching practice and it is in the school that he practises teaching.

The teaching practice curriculum content within the **college context** will include the following:

- training in observation and observation techniques such as interaction analysis, selective verbatim records, seating chart observation records, verbal flow, anecdotal records;
- simulation;
- peer-group teaching;
- micro-teaching;
- a study of teacher reflection.

When it comes to the content of the teaching practice curriculum within the school context, Turney *et al* (1985: 95) suggest that classification can be adopted where content is identified within the classroom, school and community domains. Turney *et al* (1985: 96) stated in this regard: "If teachers do not learn to operate adequately in each of these three domains their pursuit of the fundamental aim of promoting pupil learning and development will necessarily be limited".

The content of the teaching practice curriculum needs to be organised sequentially and has to be well timed. **Sequencing** the teaching practice curriculum serves two important purposes. First,

it avoids the much criticised **immediate** and **total immersion** into full time teaching which overwhelms student teachers. Second, it make it possible to build into the curriculum a logical development in the introduction and practising of the skills. A number of sequences have been suggested and a few examples are discussed below.

The following pre-student teaching laboratory experiences feature in most programmes that sequence their teaching practice curriculum. They are introductory experiences to fully fledged teaching practice in schools and take place mostly within the college campus. They include such activities:

- studying children;
- observing teachers;
- helping children with particular learning tasks;
- analysing real and simulated learning incidents;
- role playing;
- training in specific teaching skills and micro-teaching;
- examining and developing curriculum materials;
- reviewing and constructing lesson plans and learning units;
- exploring community resources;
- participating in staff meetings and in conferences with parents (Turney *et al* 1985: 14).

The introductory and initial experiences in the teaching practice learning process are followed by sequenced experiences in the school which include:

- teaching individual pupils, then small groups to entire class units;
- brief periods of teaching experience to progressively larger ones;
- simulation techniques to real life situations.

Time is another *critical factor* when developing a teaching practice curriculum. Turney *et al* (1985: 10) identified two main issues on the timing of teaching practice experiences. The first is the allocation of time to the teaching practice period in each phase of the course and the second is the allocation of time to experiences within each teaching practice session or episode. The time allocated to teaching practice within each phase of the course varies, starting with short periods of hours of a day to weeks and in developing countries where there is acute teacher shortages, it can extend to a school term or a year. Research carried out on the effects of short and long periods of practice (Davis 1976; Young 1978) showed that there was no difference in

teaching behaviour attributable to the duration of the practice (Turney *et al* 1985: 11). Turney *et al* (1985: 11) concluded that it would appear that **'more'** is not necessarily **'better'.** Logic however dictates that there is an advantage in having more time for teaching practice than less. Given the multiplicity of roles, tasks and skills to be learned and practised by the student, more time would be preferred. The constraint to affording more time to teaching practice is the high costs involved especially, as Turney *et al* (1985: 10) rightly point out, on staff, time and supervisory allowances.

On the issue of time allocated to each experience, the critical factors are the *quality of the experiences* and the *quality of supervision.* Turney *et al* make the following suggestion on the time factor in the teaching practice curriculum:

> *"Within the time allocated to the practicum there is need to greatly increase the amount of time the students are engaged in* ***planned*** *experiences under* ***supervision.*** *A curriculum must be devised that fully and productively engages the time of both students and supervisors"* (own emphasis).

## 3.4.3 The implementation of the teaching practice curriculum

The successful implementation of the teaching practice curriculum will be determined by two main factors (apart from others). These factors are the **preparation** for the teaching practice experiences by the students, lecturers and school teachers involved as well as the **quality of supervision** the students get from the lecturers and co-operating teachers.

### *3.4.3.1 Preparation*

The preparation for the implementation of the teaching practice curriculum has three main dimensions; the drawing up of a syllabus and scheme for the teaching practice programme, the preparation of college lecturers for their roles and involvement in the teaching practice programme and the preparation of the schools and teachers who will be involved in the implementation of the teaching practice programme.

*i)* *The drawing up of the syllabus and schemes*

At the institutional level, the syllabus and scheme for the implementation of the teaching practice curriculum have to be prepared. Turney *et al* (1985: 258) point out that "it will be necessary to develop a **flexible** framework of practicum aims and guidelines within which various experiences are incorporated". The implementation documents of the teaching practice curriculum can take two basic forms; a scheme format or a module format. Turney *et al* (1985: 268) propose a module approach. They state: "To ensure that the practicum experiences are suitably planned to facilitate the pursuit of their activities by students, it is suggested that teacher education programmes develop student experience modules for all tasks selected for inclusion in the practicum curriculum". Du Plessis (1985) also adopted the module approach in her study "The Development of a Teaching Practice Curriculum: A Tertiary Didactic Investigation". However while the module approach does have many advantages, its main advantage of detail or comprehensiveness is also its major weakness in that it runs the danger of being cumbersome and prescriptive. The syllabus or scheme format is less cumbersome and flexible. It is therefore suggested that the two approaches be used. This can be done by using the module for those teaching practice experiences involving students studying, researching and practising on their own and the scheme format for those experiences involving the student working with the lecturer or co-operating teacher.

*ii)* *The preparation of college lecturers for implementing the teaching practice curriculum*

The college lecturers directly involved in the planning of the teaching practice programme have to prepare the others who will implement the planned programme. All lecturers in the institution need to understand **the philosophy** undergirding the teaching practice curriculum as well as the **manner** in which it is to be implemented. This can be achieved through discussions and consultations. Ross *et al* (1992: 38) rightly state:

*"The effectiveness of the program is dependent on the development of common **visions, goals** and **definitions.** This requires conflict, collaboration and consensus building"* (own emphasis).

*iii) Preparation of the school and co-operating teachers for the implementation of the teaching practice curriculum*

It is important that the college liaises closely with the practising schools so that the school headmaster and the teachers involved in the teaching practice exercise are aware of the college aims and objectives for the exercise; the college requirements from the students and the teachers who will supervise the students and the approach of the college to student supervision and assessment (Ndlovu 1993: 63). It is necessary for the college to have an orientation or training programme for all co-operating teachers who will be involved in the teaching practice exercise. It is in such a programme that a joint strategy by the college and the practising schools is formulated. Expectations of the college, as well as those of the school from the whole teaching practice exercise should be discussed. The college has to develop a system of partnership with practising schools and draw from the teachers' experience in planning and implementing teaching practice experiences included in the teaching practice curriculum.

### *3.4.3.2 Supervision*

Supervision includes **teaching, guidance** and **support.** Teaching practice supervision is the process in teacher education that makes it possible for someone experienced in teaching to teach the student how to teach as the student practises in the school (Ndlovu 1993: 69). The teaching aspect of supervision is also expressed in the scientific approach to supervision which views the task of the supervisor as the discovery of the best procedures for performing teaching tasks through research and the process of passing on these methods to the teachers, so as to ensure maximum pupil achievement (McNeil in Sergiovanni 1982: 19). The **guidance** and **support** element of supervision features mostly in the humanistic approach to supervision where the teacher is helped in the process of self-discovery and self-improvement. According to Maroufi

(1988: 85), the key notion in the humanistic orientation to supervision is personal experience. The other approach which stresses the **support** aspect of supervision is clinical supervision. Nettle (1990: 126) states that it concentrates on **mutual helping** and not on the evaluation of one person by the other.

Supervision of students is a critical factor in the success or effective implementation of the teaching practice curriculum. A **clinical** approach to supervision is suggested as the basic approach to be supported by other approaches and models. Some form of eclecticism is therefore recommended. This approach is supported by Clark (1990: 39) who states that regardless of the style of the supervisor or supervisory process employed, effective supervision of student teachers must rely on the **real world of the classroom**. He sees the following questions critical to supervision. For the student the question is: *"How can supervision improve the quality and effectiveness of teaching in my classroom ?"* The equivalent question for the supervisor is: *"What is the most effective form of supervision to use in any given circumstance with the individual concerned ?"*.

## 3.5 RESUMÉ

In this chapter, the conceptualisation of the teaching practice curriculum was focused upon. The focus was on three issues. First, the place of teaching practice in teacher education where the **theory-practice relationship** was explored. Second, the **theoretical contexts of the teaching practice curriculum** where the *theoretical rationale* of teaching practice was examined using a historical development approach. It was revealed in the analysis that the theoretical contexts of teaching practice evolved from the **academic tradition**, through the **social efficiency tradition**, expressed mainly through competency-based teacher education, through **developmentalist tradition**, mainly reflected in humanistic teacher education to **reflective teacher education**. Reflective teacher education was shown to have developed as an *integrative conceptualisation* of teacher education. **Reflection** as a concept in teacher education was seen to have developed with the advancement of teacher education and was traceable from the early traditions of social efficiency and the developmentalist tradition. It was concluded from the ensuing analysis, that reflective teacher education was the *current focus* of **teacher education**

**development and reform**. Third, a teaching practice curriculum model was proposed, where the **principles** underlying this curriculum as well as the **structure** of the curriculum were suggested. In the next chapter, the prevailing teaching practice situation in Zimbabwean Colleges of teacher education is to be discussed. This will be done as a prelude to developing the proposed teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# THE CURRENT TEACHING PRACTICE SITUATION IN TEACHERS' COLLEGES IN ZIMBABWE

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## THE CURRENT TEACHING PRACTICE SITUATION IN TEACHERS' COLLEGES IN ZIMBABWE

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

A theoretical framework for the teaching practice curriculum to be developed in this study has been suggested in chapters two and three. In this chapter the current teaching practice situation in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe is examined and the views of the lecturers and students on the current approach are analysed. This prepares for the development of the teaching practice curriculum which is proposed in chapter five.

The views of lecturers and students were gathered through a questionnaire survey of five of the fifteen colleges in the country. These were primary teachers' colleges; three conventional colleges and two Zintec colleges. The survey focused on the primary teachers' colleges because it is in the primary conventional teachers' colleges where teaching practice is a year long. In Zintec colleges the duration of teaching practice is two years and two terms. Teaching practice in secondary teachers' colleges is only one term (three months) in a two year long course. There are views that this is too short a time to give students enough exposure and training in classroom practice. Hence the focus on primary teachers' colleges was aimed at getting views of lecturers and students who were in a teaching practice programme that was viewed as the *norm* rather than the *exception.* The survey focussed on the following aspects of the teaching practice programme/curriculum:

- Aims of teaching practice
- Observation in a teaching practice programme
- Teaching skills
- Micro-teaching
- Peer teaching
- Supervision
- Assessment.

The purpose of this two-pronged approach to the examination of the current approach to teaching practice, preparation and implementation is to highlight its shortcomings and to prepare the ground for the proposal of a new approach to implementing teaching practice in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe through the development of a sound teaching practice curriculum.

## 4.2 THE CURRENT APPROACH TO TEACHING PRACTICE IN TEACHERS' COLLEGES IN ZIMBABWE

In a study carried out during 1992 and 1993, the researcher critically examined the teaching practice model in Zimbabwean colleges of teacher education in order to indicate both its strengths and weaknesses and to suggest ways of improving this model (Ndlovu 1993: ii). The findings of that study form the basis of the examination of the current approach to teaching practice. Changes that have taken place since 1993 are incorporated into the discussion in order to reflect the current situation in teaching practice.

### 4.2.1 Teaching practice within teacher education since 1980

The approach to teaching practice in Zimbabwean Teachers' Colleges since 1980 had been greatly influenced by the overriding aim of releasing the student teachers into the schools as soon as possible and keeping them there over a long period of time and by doing so alleviating the teacher shortage in the country as a result of the major educational expansion that took place soon after the attainment of independence in 1980. The Secretary for Education in his annual report (1984: 15) stated:

> *"To counteract the shortage of teachers, changes have been effected in the methodology for training teachers. Previously, teacher trainees spent three years of continuous training at colleges. The practice now is that they spend the first and third years at college and second and fourth years are for teaching practice. This has gone a long way to alleviate shortage of teachers".*

Free primary education was introduced in Zimbabwe soon after the attainment of independence in 1980, and access to secondary education for the majority of primary school leavers was made possible by the removal of screening in grade 7, thus making it possible for pupils to proceed unimpeded through four years of education. As Dorsey *et al* (1991: 1) pointed out, although other countries in Africa experienced rapid expansion of their educational systems at independence, none attempted universal access to primary and secondary education to the same degree or as rapidly as Zimbabwe did. This tremendous expansion of primary and secondary education resulted in a serious teacher shortage. Dorsey *et al* (1991: iv) observed that as at April 1991 half of the primary school teachers were untrained. The answer to the teacher shortage was found in using the student teacher as a fully fledged teacher during the time the student was on teaching practice. This necessitated the restructuring of the teacher education course. The duration of the course was extended from three to four years in a course structure that was:

- First year in college
- Second year on teaching practice
- Third year in college
- Fourth year on teaching practice.

The course structure was later modified to three years in duration with the teaching practice year sandwiched between the first and third years of theoretical studies at college.

Parallel to this major restructuring of the conventional teacher education course in Zimbabwe, whose aim was to release students to alleviate the teacher shortage brought about by the unprecedented expansion of the primary and secondary education, Zimbabwe embarked on a major innovation in teacher education termed ZINTEC, an acronym for Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course. The Zintec mode of teacher training is basically a distance education approach where students are trained in the field while they teach. The Zintec course is four years in duration (twelve terms) with the first and last two terms spent in college for residential tuition to introduce students to the course during the initial two terms and to consolidate the course and examine them in the last two terms. Teaching practice in the Zintec course is eight terms long. It was the success of the Zintec mode of teacher education that brought about the changes in the conventional mode of teacher education: the lengthening of the course from three to four years

and the structure of the course to first year in college and second year on teaching practice, the third year in college and the fourth year on teaching practice.

Chivore (1990: 80) quotes the National Report on Zintec which stated:

> *The success of Zintec revealed by the evaluation exercise resulted on the Zintecisation of teacher training colleges. In place of the 3 years' conventional training programme a four-year course comprising of first year residential, second year on-the-job, third year residential and fourth year on-the-job has been instituted.*

Sixteen years after independence the radical measures taken by the Zimbabwean government to resolve the teacher shortage in the country have borne fruit. The country is as at 1996 just about to resolve the teacher shortage crisis. Whereas in the past all teachers who passed their course were sure of getting employment, in 1995 some secondary school teachers struggled to find employment. The Sunday News of 21 January 1996 stated "Several teachers who recently qualified from teachers' colleges and the University of Zimbabwe remain in the streets after the opening of schools as they have failed to find jobs within the Ministry of Education". A year later the Sunday News of 19 January 1997 had as one of its headlines **"Jobless teachers roam the streets"** as Zimbabwe has resolved its teacher shortage. Perusuh (1997: 2) rightly observes that the biggest challenge facing teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe now is how to improve the quality of teacher preparation. Because of this major national accomplishment, teacher educators and the Ministry of Higher Education have had a re-examination of the teacher training programme, specifically the teaching practice approach. Since 1995 student teachers are no longer responsible for classes. Student teachers are no longer used as fully fledged teachers while on teaching practice. Zimbabwe has reverted back to the conventional approach to student placement in schools where the student is attached to a qualified teacher for his teaching practice.

In his teaching practice report for 1995, Dr. Shumba the chairman of the Department of Teacher EducationTeaching Practice Coordinating Committee wrote:

> *"Reports by teaching practice coordinators, assessors and teaching practice departments suggest mixed feelings about the operation and effectiveness of the attachment system. Some favour it but some do not. We can only urge colleges to carefully and critically analyse the pros and cons*

*of the attachment system and to come up with concrete ideas for improving or reviewing the operation of the system".*

In a previous study (1993) the researcher observed that the Zimbabwean model, with its teaching practice extending for one term (three months) or one year has the potential of capitalising on the positive aspects of the extended practicum. It was however observed that the model does run the risk of being didactically unsound in that the one year or one term continuous teaching practice removes the students' opportunities to reflect on and refine their teaching skills and style with college tuition (Ndlovu 1993: 174-175).

What the current teaching practice model in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges does have on the positive side is in essence affording the college and school supervisors **time** to effectively help the students develop their teaching skills. Turney *et al* (1982: 58) observed that two of the most powerful factors limiting the influence of tertiary supervisors on student teachers are **time** and **place.** While the current teaching practice model in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges does afford the supervisors time, it has not been possible for the supervisors to effectively exploit this advantage due to financial constraints, lack of suitable transport and teaching commitments at college.

### 4.2.2 The organisation of teaching practice

The organisation of teaching practice in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe rests on the teaching practice department. While it is termed a department, it is really a one person affair; with one or two assistants. The major function of this department is **organisational** and **administrative,** rather than **academic** and **tutorial**. While all lecturers are members of the teaching practice department by virtue of their being involved in teaching practice supervision and assessment, they are to all intents and purposes *passive members.* They concentrate more on their lecturing and teaching tasks in their teaching departments and wait to be organised for teaching practice supervision and assessment by the head of the teaching practice department. The one, two or three active members of the teaching practice department do all the planning and organisation of the teaching practice programme, bringing in the rest of the lecturers to discuss the implementation of these plans and where they fit in. There is a lot of consultation between the

head of the teaching practice department and other heads of departments to ensure that lectures and tutorials are not disrupted when lecturers go out on teaching practice supervision. The usual practice is that lecturers go to supervise students on teaching practice when they have no lecturing loads i.e. when they are free of lecturing. However when they have to be away for a week in pursuit of students placed in far distant schools, adjustments of the teaching timetable are made to accommodate this.

While the teaching practice department plans and organises teaching practice programmes in schools, the preparation of students for teaching practice takes place within teaching departments and subjects. Whereas lecturers play a relatively passive role within the teaching practice department they do play a very active role in initial teaching practice activities such as micro-teaching and peer-group teaching which are integrated into subject methodology and pedagogy (Ndlovu 1993: 140).

Teaching departments introduce students to **teaching skills** and these are practised through **peer teaching** and **micro-teaching**. In primary teachers' colleges this is done within *applied education* while in secondary teachers' colleges it is done in *subject methodology* courses. The current practice therefore is that during the first year at college, subjects and departments introduce students to teaching through methods courses, peer teaching and micro-teaching, in preparation for the year long teaching practice during the second year. The teaching practice department takes over from the teaching departments towards the end of the year when it places the students into practising schools and prepares the lecturers for their supervision.

The exception to this general practice is in the case of the post 'A' level two year course for secondary school teachers and in Zintec. For the post 'A' level course, while subjects prepare students for teaching practice during the first year as in the primary teachers' colleges, the actual teaching practice is only one term long (three months), instead of one year. In Zintec, the students are prepared for teaching practice by subjects and departments for two terms (six months), before they are being placed in schools for ten terms for their teaching practice and distance education.

The teaching practice preparation and organisation at college level, involves the head of the teaching practice department in organising meetings and workshops with lecturers. It is here that such issues as student placement in schools, the formation of supervision teams and the choice of team leaders, travel arrangements, supervision and assessment procedures are discussed (Ndlovu 1993: 140). Sessions with students cover such issues as channels of communication, records students have to keep, their supervision and assessment by college lecturers and school-based supervisors and the students' code of conduct while on teaching practice.

It is the teaching practice department that also prepares schools for the teaching practice programme. Most of this preparation is done through correspondence, due to financial constraints and transport limitations, as well as the distances of the majority of practising schools from teaching colleges. Heads of practising schools are sent information on the teaching practice exercise which includes: the college expectations of the students, how the school-based supervisors are to supervise and assess the students and how problems arising during the teaching practice programme implementation are to be resolved. When funds permit, which is very rare, workshops and seminars are organised by the college through the teaching practice head of department for school-based supervisors as part of the students' orientation for the exercise.

Just before the end of the third term, towards the end of the year, students are encouraged to visit their practising schools for familiarisation purposes. It is usually during these visits that the students meet their headmasters and receive information (such as syllabuses, schemes of work and class records) which they need in order to begin preparing for their teaching.

Heads of teaching practice departments in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe have often complained of being overworked because of the multiplicity of functions they attend to, which include:

- Attending to reports from schools
- Attending to teaching practice correspondence
- Planning the placement of students into practising schools and supervision schedules
- Attending to telephone calls, students', staff and headmasters' queries
- Recording of teaching practice marks
- Preparing for teaching practice examinations.

However, while the complaints of heads of teaching practice departments are valid, this has not stopped most lecturers in teachers' colleges aspiring for the post. This is because by its very nature, the job description of a teaching practice head, encompasses administrative as well as academic tasks that have stood the holders of the post in good stead when it came to competing for the post of vice or deputy principal of a teachers' college. The majority of deputy principals of teachers' colleges have at some stage in their careers been heads of teaching practice.

In a critique of the organisation of teaching practice in 1993, the researcher observed that while the importance of the teaching practice department had always been appreciated by both the Ministry of Higher Education and the colleges, major flaws in the functions of this department had never been positively addressed (Ndlovu 1993: 194).

The basic weakness inherent in the departments of teaching practice in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges is their inadequate staffing. There are usually one, two or three permanent or full time members of this critical department, resulting in their being overworked and sometimes being overwhelmed by the work to be done. This inadequate staffing of the teaching practice department arises from the perceived function of the department which is regarded mainly as administrative and organisational rather than didactic. It is therefore assumed that one or two people can plan, organise and execute the teaching practice programmes for the whole college (Ndlovu 1993: 194). The researcher pointed out that colleges in Zimbabwe need to realise that there was more to the teaching practice department than mere planning and organisation. There was a need to greatly enhance the didactic function of the department of teaching practice. This, it was stated, would necessitate the formulation of a well structured and coordinated teaching practice curriculum (Ndlovu 1993: 194). It was further suggested that if the teaching practice department was to take on this didactic function, more lecturers would need to be appointed. A team of lecturers specialising on teaching practice related activities would have the time to plan and implement the teaching practice curriculum (Ndlovu 1993: 195).

### 4.2.3 Supervision of teaching practice

Supervision of teaching practice is really the didactic element in teaching practice where the supervisor helps the student to develop and refine his/her teaching skills. In teacher education colleges in Zimbabwe, the tendency is to simultaneously supervise and assess the student in one visit. Shumba (1996) states: "Due to practical considerations, lecturers have to perform supervision and assessment functions simultaneously. Lecturers serve as both assessor and advisor. This is a problem as Morris (1970) notes. The fact that a tutor grades and advises, creates in the student an element of fear which could become an obstacle to the student's effective acquisition of the role of a teacher. Supervisors should be aware of this in roles imposed upon them by practical considerations and system constraints". Within the same context, Nyarawanda and Siyakwazi (1993: 151) contend that; "After supervising or assessing a student's lesson, disagreements have sometimes arisen between the student and his/her tutor. These disagreements have at times ended in fiery verbal exchanges, and, on very rare occasions, physical exchanges". This approach has resulted in the supervision element suffering, while the assessment is viewed with suspicion by students who feel they are not fairly treated. This has also emerged in students' responses in the survey which was conducted.

Supervision and assessment of students on teaching practice is done by college lecturers and school-based supervisors who in the main are headmasters and senior teachers. However the lecturers take full responsibility for the supervision and assessment, with school-based supervisors playing a supportive role. The University of Zimbabwe's stipulated supervision and assessment requirement reflects this approach. While a student is required to be supervised and assessed a minimum of five times in a year and three times in a term, three supervisions and assessments should be by the college and two by the school within the five supervisions, and two should be by the college within the three in the term long teaching practice.

Within each college, strategies of student supervision are worked out. The common approach involves the head of the teaching practice department organising supervision teams in consultation with other heads of departments to avoid clashes in the lecturing and supervising time of lecturers (Ndlovu 1993: 149). Each team has a team leader whose responsibilities include the working out of the supervision itinerary, organisation of transport and

accommodation. After the supervision trips, it is the team leader who collates documents from his team, writes a report on the trip and hands these to the head of the teaching practice department.

Two types of supervision trips are undertaken, day long trips and long distance trips. The day long trips focus on students who are placed in schools within the vicinity of the college, so that supervisors can drive to schools early in the morning and return in the afternoon. The long distance trips usually last for a week and they are targeted at practising schools that are a long distance from the college. Problems of transport and finance have dogged the supervision process of students in teachers' colleges since 1980. The government vehicle fleet used by lecturers for teaching practice supervision is very old and prone to breakdowns. While lecturers are encouraged to use their own cars for teaching practice supervision, lack of finance to pay them for this on a mileage basis militates against this. Furthermore, lecturers tend to be reluctant to use their vehicles if the trip will take them to a rugged and rural road network.

In the analysis of teaching practice supervision in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges, the researcher observed that simultaneously supervising and assessing a student was fraught with problems, and hence not effective in the majority of cases (Ndlovu 1993: 201):

> *Firstly, it creates within the student stress which as research evidence has shown detracts from effective practice of teaching skills and experimentation; secondly, the supervisor with his attention divided between helping the student in his development of teaching skills and assessing the quality of the student teaching cannot do justice to both if tackled simultaneously; and thirdly, supervision needs time and a number of observations and conferences between the supervisor and student, in an empathic relationship. Introducing assessment into the supervision visit destroys the atmosphere for effective supervision.*

The current minimum stipulated frequency and length of supervision that colleges have to meet in order to satisfy the Department of Teacher Education, which is the certificating institution, is another major weakness of the supervision process in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges. This minimum stipulated frequency of supervision, which has tended to be the norm, is that in a year long teaching practice, the student should be supervised three times by the college and twice by the school, while in a term long teaching practice, it is twice by the college and once by the

school. These stipulated minimum number of supervision frequencies were a compromise arrangement between the Ministry of Higher Education which administers the teachers' colleges and the University of Zimbabwe, the certificating institution. Due to financial constraints, lack of suitable vehicles and very high staff: student ratios in teachers' colleges, it has not been possible since 1980 to adequately supervise students on teaching practice. Yet up until 1995, these students played a major role in alleviating the teacher shortage in the schools, both primary and secondary, that mushroomed in the rural areas of Zimbabwe soon after independence in 1980. Therefore, in order not to disadvantage the student, this compromise on the minimum frequency of supervision of students on teaching practice was struck between the two key players in teacher education in Zimbabwe, the Ministry of Higher Education and the University of Zimbabwe.

Ndlovu (1993: 202 - 203) pointed out that it is quite impossible to carry out an effective supervision programme, given the frequencies mentioned. The least such frequencies can achieve is an assessment mark. There is no doubt that if the prevailing national conditions improve so that students are placed in accessible schools in close proximity to colleges and transport and financial conditions improved, the frequency of supervision would be revised and increased.

In 1995, a major change in the teaching practice aspect of the student teacher took place which was bound to have a significant impact on the supervision of students on teaching practice, giving credence to Ndlovu's contention above. With effect from January 1995, student teachers are no longer fully responsible for classes while on teaching practice. They are now supernumeraries attached to qualified teachers for their teaching practice. This was brought about by the realisation that the critical teacher shortage that had hounded Zimbabwe since 1980 is over. It is therefore then possible for teachers' colleges to concentrate on didactically effective approaches of supervising students on teaching practice. It is thus possible to increase the frequency of student supervision on teaching practice to adequate levels because the students can be placed in schools in close proximity to the college. It is also possible to attach students to qualified and experienced teachers who can supervise the students more frequently.

The current situation is therefore conducive to effective supervision of students by the college as well as the school-based supervisors. Ndlovu did however point out another major flaw in the supervision process. This was the quality of supervision the students receive from both college-based and school-based supervisors. As he pointed out:

> *"Supervision is a subject with a theoretical framework and knowledge-base as well as a practical side to it. An effective supervisor is bound to be one who has studied the theory of supervision and been trained in the practical skills of effective supervision" (Ndlovu 1993: 203).*

According to Sergiovanni (1982: 69) a theory of practice in supervision and evaluation of teaching would be concerned initially with three questions:

- What is going on in this classroom ?
- What ought to be going on ? and
- What do these events, activities and aspirations mean ?"

Jarvis (1984: 337) felt that supervision is a highly skilled and important aspect of training and, as adult education training develops it is, therefore, necessary to see its role within the whole of students' learning. The majority of college-based and school-based supervisors in Zimbabwe lack the theory and practice of supervision. They also lack the critical skill of observation and the various observation techniques that are a pre-requisite to effective student teaching practice supervision.

Ndlovu (1993: 203) observed that: there seems to be an erroneous assumption that once one is a college lecturer or an experienced teacher, one can effectively supervise student teaching. However it is easier for a college lecturer or experienced teacher to *assess* student teaching, especially if given clear *criteria* to rate it against, than to work with a student and *guide* him to *develop* and *refine* his **teaching skills**. It is easier to *identify* what is wrong with a student's teaching than to *help* the student remedy the wrongs in his teaching. This is why there is a need for **basic training** of student supervisors in the **theory** and **practice** of supervision.

In summary, the main features of the student supervision process within the teaching practice model in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges are:

- Supervision and assessment are done simultaneously and in this approach the potential of supervision in student development suffers.
- College-based supervision is given more credibility than school-based supervision.
- School-based supervisors are best placed to provide effective supervision to students in their schools but this potential for effective student supervision is not being fully exploited.

### 4.2.4 Teaching practice assessment

It has already been pointed out that in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges, supervision and assessment of teaching practice are done simultaneously (see par. 4.2.3). There are three levels of teaching practice assessment. The first two are college initiated assessment involving college lecturers, and school-based assessment involving the headmaster and senior experienced teachers in the school. These first two levels of assessment constitute what can be termed *formative* or *continuous* **assessment** that is carried out as the students are being supervised and helped in the acquisition and development of teaching skills (Ndlovu 1993: 156). At the end of the course, these two levels of assessment constitute what is termed **internal assessment**. The third level of assessment is *summative* assessment which involves *external* assessors selected by the University of Zimbabwe's Department of Teacher Education and led by a Chief Examiner.

In college initiated assessment, college lecturers assess the student using an assessment form where they comment and rate the performance of the student on each item of the form. The typical assessment items on the assessment form are:

- Preparation and planning
- Teaching Procedures
- Class management and control
- Marking
- Record keeping.

An overall mark or grade is awarded for the lesson observed. A copy of the assessment form is then given to the student and another given to the team leader who passes it over to the head of the teaching practice department. The head of the teaching practice and his one or two members

then enter the mark/grade of the student on a comprehensive student profile for the year group which contains the list of all the students and sections against each student for recording teaching practice marks/grades from college lecturers and school-based supervisors. The assessment forms for each student are then filed in the student's teaching practice file kept by the teaching practice department.

Apart from teaching practice forms commonly referred to as crits from college and school-based assessors, the student's teaching practice file kept by the teaching practice department contains all pertinent documents on the student. As the teaching practice programme progresses, the documents that accumulate in the student's teaching practice file create a picture about the student which helps towards the end of the course to determine whether the student is suitable for the teaching profession or not, apart from revealing whether he passes his teaching practice or not (Ndlovu 1993: 157).

At his practising school the student is required to maintain a teaching practice file which contains, among other things:

- Lesson plans of lessons taught and those to be taught
- Evaluations of lessons taught
- Copies of assessment reports written by assessors who come to assess his teaching.

The current practice is for students to be assessed by different lecturers. At the end of the teaching practice session, the various marks/grades are averaged to come up with the **final** college mark/grade.

The frequency of assessment, just like that of supervision, is minimal due to financial constraints and transport limitations. The tendency for the colleges is to meet the basic minimum requirement on assessment, stipulated by the University of Zimbabwe, which is five times a year for students on a three year course, and three times a term for those students on the shortened two year post 'A' level course.

School-based assessment has the greatest potential of being conducted more frequently due to the fact that school-based assessors are in continual contact with the student who is practising

at their school. Since 1995, when students became attached to qualified teachers for their teaching practice, it has become possible for the school-based supervision and assessment to be more thorough than the college-based one.

When funds permit, colleges, through their teaching practice departments, mount teaching practice workshops for school-based supervisors where student supervision and assessment are discussed. However while such workshops have a potential of forging a common approach to student supervision and assessment between the college and school-based supervisors and assessors, these workshops are very irregular and far apart mainly due to financial constraints and organisational problems.

The **external assessment** of students is crucial in that it *validates* the **internal assessment** of the college and determines whether the student passes or fails in teaching practice. External assessment is a sampling process where a specified percentage of the student population being examined is assessed. This sample includes all the very weak or failing candidates as well as the distinction candidates. Resulting from the performance of students in the sample, the internal and external assessors compare their marks to find out how they correlate. It is on this and the discussion that ensues that the rest of the marks are endorsed, moderated upwards or down. The external assessors also evaluate the *quality* of the college supervision, as well as the *quality* of the internal (college and school) assessment, and then make recommendations to the college for the improvement of the teaching practice programme.

The official University of Zimbabwe grading scale for teaching practice contains three types of passes and two types of failures. There is the plain pass, a pass with a merit and a pass with distinction, then a plain fail and a fail with an option to supplement. (Siyakwazi 1993: 34)

# 4.3 THE VIEWS OF LECTURERS AND STUDENTS ON THE CURRENT APPROACH TO TEACHING PRACTICE

## 4.3.1 Aims of teaching practice

The basic question that had previously been overlooked within teacher education was: "Why do teaching practice ?" *or* "What are the aims of teaching practice ?" Stones and Morris (1972: 14) found it remarkable that until the seventies there had been no serious and detailed study of the objectives of teaching practice. Turney *et al* (1985: 2) observed that in recent years the practicum had been subjected to increasing scrutiny and questions asked concerning its effectiveness. They then pointed out that:

> *"...one of the basic initial requirements of the practicum is the establishment of clear and comprehensive aims and objectives which would guide the selection and planning of student learning experiences and the work of all the practicum participants".*

Turney et al further maintained that, despite the criticism of lack of clearly stated and carefully applied purposes of practicum programmes, there had been much written recently by educators about the broad underlying aims, or the rationale, of the practicum.

In examining the views of lecturers and students on this fundamental question, a modified classification of aims of teaching practice by Cope (1971) in Stones and Morris (1972: 15-21) was adopted, as it was found to be comprehensive and representative of a broad spectrum of aims. Cope (1971) categorised the aims of teaching practice into ten categories as follows:

- **Aims on teacher-pupil relationship**

  *e.g. To provide the student with opportunities to develop greater understanding of children.*

- **Aims on the application of theory in practice**

  *e.g. To provide the student with the opportunity for applying theory in practice.*

- **Aims on the development of the student's selfknowledge**

  *e.g. To help the student develop desirable traits, attitudes and abilities for the teaching profession.*

- **Aims on assessment and evaluation**

  *e.g. To provide an opportunity for evaluating the students potential as a teacher and suitability for the teaching profession, or to allow the student to evaluate his or her own and his pupils' progress.*

  *Two examples are cited here to reveal the two-sided approach or focus of aims on assessment and evaluation by the teacher educators: focussed on the student's performance and development on one hand, and the student's own selfassessment and evaluation as well as the assessment and evaluation of the students he or she is teaching.*

- **Aims on teaching skills**

  *e.g. To provide opportunities for the student to acquire and develop teaching skills.*

- **Aims on management skills and discipline**

  *e.g. To provide the student with experience in schools which will reveal some of the problems of discipline and enable him or her to develop personal methods of control. or to provide the student with opportunities of developing powers of organisation. Two examples of this category of aims are given to reveal the two - pronged nature of the category of aims: a focus on management skills and also on discipline.*

- **Aims on relationships with colleagues in the school (teachers, other student teachers, headmaster)**

  *e.g.To provide the student with an opportunity of becoming part of the school community, familiarising him or herself with its practices and entering into an appropriate professional relationship with its adult members.*

- **Aims on the college - school interaction**

  *e.g. To provide an interchange of ideas and methods between the college and schools.*

- **Aims on understanding of school curricula**

  *e.g. To provide the student with an opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of school curricula.*

- **Aims on student's relations with the community**

  *e.g. To provide opportunities for students to relate to members of the community in the school vicinity including parents of children they teach.*

A random sample of lecturers from each of the five colleges and students from four colleges was asked to rank these ten categories of aims of teaching practice starting with the most important as (1) and ending with the least important as (10). The questionnaire returns from students of the third college were lost and the data analysis was done without them. The numbers in the samples vary due to varying returns of questionnaires from each college. However, despite this, a general pattern emerged when the rankings were analysed to reveal the category of aims viewed as most important and the category of aims viewed as least important. The scale devised to analyse the ranking had 1 & 2 as the most important aims and 9 & 10 as the least important aims. Using the total tallies for each ranking on each aim and the number of respondents the percentage was worked out. The results of the analysis are as shown in table 4.1.

**TABLE 4.1**

# ANALYSIS OF THE RANKINGS OF AIMS OF TEACHING PRACTICE ACCORDING TO THE DEGREE OF IMPORTANCE

| COLLEGE | MOST IMPORTANT CATEGORY OF AIMS | LEAST IMPORTANT CATEGORY OF AIMS |
|---|---|---|
| ONE | Lecturers. 4.2 (87%) followed by 4.5 (73%)<br>----------<br>Students. 4.2 (67%) followed by 4.5 (49%) | 4.8 (67%) and 4.10 (67%)<br>----------<br>4.10 (63%) followed by 4.8 (62%) |
| TWO | Lecturers. 4.5 (85%) followed by 4.2 (75%)<br>----------<br>Students. 4.2 (76%) followed by 4.5 (44%) | 4.10 (62%) and 4.8 (62%)<br>----------<br>4.10 (78%) followed by 4.8 (48%) |
| THREE | Lecturers. 4.2 (50%) and 4.5 (50%)<br>----------<br>Students - No returns | 4.8 (50%) followed by 4.10 (29%)<br>---------- |
| FOUR | Lecturers. 4.5 (75%) followed by 4.1 (50%)<br>----------<br>Students. 4.2 (61%) followed by 4.5 (44%) | 4.10 (75%) followed by 4.8 (50%)<br>----------<br>4.8 (72%) followed by 4.10 (56%) |
| FIVE | Lecturers. 4.2 (66%) followed by 4.5 (44%)<br>----------<br>Students. 4.2 (59%) followed by 4.5 (36%) | 4.10 (55%) and 4.8 (55%)<br>----------<br>4.10 (72%) followed by 4.8 (40%) |

Key: 4.2 Aims on the application of theory in practice
4.5 Aims on Teaching Skills
4.8 Aims on the College-School interaction
4.10 Aims on student's relations with the community

It is clear from table one that for both lecturers and students in the sample the most important aims of teaching practice are aims on the *application of theory in practice* and aims on *teaching skills*. Both lecturers and students in the sample single out the following two categories of aims as least important: aims on the *college-school interaction* and aims on the *student's relations with the community*.

Teaching practice in Zimbabwe has tended to follow a **competency-based** approach where the focus of training has been on the acquisition of teaching skills. In the survey, when asked to indicate the aims that they concentrate on in their colleges out of the ten categories given, lecturers gave the following aims the highest ranking:

- Aims on the application of theory in practice.
- Aims on teacher - pupil relationship.
- Aims on teaching skills.

The category of aims that lecturers gave least attention to were:

- Aims on relationships with colleagues in the school.
- Aims on the college - school interaction.
- Aims on students' relations with the community.

### 4.3.2 Observation in teaching practice

Observation plays a major role in learning to teach and in the actual process of teaching. Fish (1989: 104) states:

> *"Of itself, the basic strategy of 'observing' a teacher and a class might or might not be a useful tool in learning to teach. It is what is involved in the activity of observation, the quality of the observations, and the short and long term uses to which these are put by the student, which affect the quality of the training and ultimately, possibly, the quality of the student's teaching".*

Students need to be taught observation techniques and how to effectively use the information they gather through observation to learn about teaching.

A sample of lecturers from five colleges were asked whether while preparing students for teaching practice in their courses, they taught them classroom observation techniques. The percentage for each response was arrived at by using the total tallies and the number in the sample for each college. Table 4.2 shows the results of the analysis of responses to that question.

**TABLE 4.2**

## PERCENTAGE OF LECTURERS WHO TEACH OR DO NOT TEACH STUDENTS CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TECHNIQUES AS PREPARATION FOR TEACHING PRACTICE

| COLLEGE | % WHO TEACH OBSERVATION TECHNIQUES | % WHO DO NOT TEACH OBSERVATION TECHNIQUES | NO RESPONSE |
|---|---|---|---|
| ONE<br>N = 12 | 58% | 25% | 17% |
| TWO<br>N = 16 | 87% | 12% | 1% |
| THREE<br>N = 14 | 86% | 7% | 7% |
| FOUR<br>N = 22 | 73% | 18% | 9% |
| FIVE<br>N = 9 | 78% | 22% | - |

Table 4.2 does show that the majority of leturers said they taught the students classroom observation skills. A sample of final year students in four of the five colleges were asked whether they had been taught some observation techniques. Table 4.3 gives an analysis of their responses.Using the total tallies under each response of *yes* or *no* and the *number of students* in the sample for each college, the percentage response was calculated.

TABLE 4.3

## STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO WHETHER THEY WERE TAUGHT OBSERVATION TECHNIQUES

| COLLEGE | YES | NO | NO RESPONSE |
|---|---|---|---|
| ONE<br>N = 49 | 80% | 18% | 2% |
| TWO<br>N = 52 | 73% | 23% | 4% |
| FOUR<br>N = 29 | 86% | 14% | - |
| FIVE<br>N = 22 | 64% | 31% | 5% |

Table 4.3 reveals that the majority of students in the sample from the four colleges said they were taught classroom observation techniques. This supports the response of lecturers in Table 4.2 where the majority said they taught classroom observation techniques to the students.

Lecturers in the sample from the five colleges were asked to list problems they faced when involving students in classroom observation as a preparation for their teaching practice. Table 4.4 shows the number of problems given by the lecturers in the sample from the five colleges. A total of 80 problems were mentioned by the 73 lecturers.

**TABLE 4.4**

## PROBLEMS LECTURERS FACE WHEN ENGAGING STUDENTS IN CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AS PREPARATION FOR TEACHING PRACTICE

| COLLEGE | NO. IN SAMPLE | NO. OF PROBLEMS | % OF TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|
| ONE | 12 | 9 | 10% |
| TWO | 16 | 24 | 30% |
| THREE | 14 | 10 | 12% |
| FOUR | 22 | 26 | 34% |
| FIVE | 9 | 11 | 14% |
| TOTAL | 73 | 80 | 100% |

From analysis of the problems which the lecturers in the sample from the five colleges have faced when engaging their students in classroom observation, the following emerged as the common problems:

- Large numbers of students and few lecturers to effectively engage them in classroom observation.
- Time constraints, making it difficult to carry out classroom observation.
- Students' negative attitudes which militate against effective observation sessions.
- Problems inherent in the student, which could be resolved by a more focused training programme on observation.
- Logistical problems such as lack of transport and finance.
- Lack of equipment such as video and audio recorders although one can observe that observation sessions can be effectively carried out without this type of equipment.

The lecturers in the sample from the five colleges were asked to give some suggestions on how their colleges could solve the problems they faced when involving their students in classroom observation as a preparation for teaching practice.

**TABLE 4.5**

## SUGGESTIONS LECTURERS GAVE ON HOW COLLEGES CAN SOLVE PROBLEMS FACED BY LECTURERS WHEN ENGAGING STUDENTS IN CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

| COLLEGE | NO. IN SAMPLE | NO. OF SUGGES-TIONS | % OF TOTAL SUGGESTIONS |
|---|---|---|---|
| ONE | 12 | 10 | 16% |
| TWO | 16 | 20 | 31% |
| THREE | 14 | 8 | 13% |
| FOUR | 22 | 20 | 31% |
| FIVE | 9 | 6 | 9% |
| TOTAL | 73 | 64 | 100% |

Table 4.5 shows the number of suggestions given by the sample of lecturers from each of the five colleges.

From the analysis of the 64 suggestions to solve problems which lecturers in colleges face when involving their students in classroom observation given by the 73 lecturers in the sample, the solutions centre on the following:

- Resolving problems inherent in the students due to inadequate training through an effective training programme.
- Restructuring the curriculum to make it possible to effectively train the students.
- Providing more time for preparing and engaging students in classroom observation.
- Resolving logistical problems which include provision of vehicles and finance to carry out the programme.
- Reduction of sizes of student groups making it possible for lecturers to effectively train the students.
- Procuring adequate equipment such as video and audio recorders.
- Changing students' negative attitudes through training.

The problems lecturers face when engaging students in observation together with the suggested solutions will be taken into account in the development of the teaching practice curriculum which is proposed.

### 4.3.3 Acquisition of teaching skills as a pre-requisite to effective teaching

The teacher training aspect of teacher education involves the acquisition of the necessary teaching skills by the student through a well structured programme which involves a lot of practical work in the form of teaching practice in various forms. Teaching skills are **open** and **complex** in nature (Tomlinson 1995: 14). According to Tomlinson (1995: 15), **closed** skills involve relatively more predictable and regular **context** demands, while open ones demand more and operate within a **context** that is not regular but dynamic. Because of this **open** and **complex** nature of teaching, Tomlinson states that it has been described as **'messy'** (own emphasis). In describing skill acquisition and development, Duminy *et al* (1992: 102) state:

> *"To improve your skills you **identify them, separate them and slow them down, and concentrate on one** thing at a time as far as possible".*

Verster and Potgieter (1991: 54) made a similar observation, saying that getting to **know** and **learning** how to apply teaching skills can best be accomplished if students are introduced to only **one skill at a time** in order to practise it. They further pointed out that as soon as the students have mastered a number of skills, it becomes reasonably easy for them to **combine** different skills in the complete situation of instructive education in which all these skills or a large number of them may be used. Commenting specifically about developing teaching skills, Duminy *et al* (1992: 102) say we first have to think carefully about how far teaching as a whole can be improved by **practising separate** skills, even with a coach helping the student teacher.

Approaches to developing teaching skills in student teachers as well as practising teachers, include the traditional approaches like **"Sitting with Nellie"** (Stones and Morris 1972: 3) the **apprenticeship** approach which is also termed as the **model-the-master teacher** approach, and the **master-the-teaching-model** approach (Stones and Morris 1977: 8 - 11). Another way of

conceptualising approaches to teaching skills development is by focusing on the method used. Within this context the following approaches can be identified:

- the micro-teaching approach.
- the peer teaching approach.
- the block teaching approach in practising schools.

In order to find out the views of lecturers and students in Zimbabwe on teaching skills, a classification of teaching skills adapted from the Florida categories of teacher behaviour (Turney *et al* 1977: 22 - 70) was used. The Florida categories of teacher behaviour was used as it incorporates teaching skills taught and practised in teacher education colleges in Zimbabwe as depicted by Bourdillon (1983: 15 - 18).

**TABLE 4.6**

# A CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHING SKILLS ADAPTED FROM THE FLORIDA CATEGORIES OF TEACHER BEHAVIOUR

**(Turney et al 1977: 22 - 70)**

- **PLANNING INSTRUCTION**
  which includes:
  - *stating aims and objectives*
  - *selecting methods of teaching*
  - *drawing up schemes*
  - *lesson plans*

- **CONDUCTING OR IMPLEMENTING INSTRUCTION/TEACHING**
  which includes:
  - *establishing rapport*
  - *motivating students*
  - *conducting discussion*
  - *small group activities*
  - *conducting individual activities*
  - *class management*
  - *providing for feed-back*
  - *questioning*
  - *use of audio-visual aids*
  - *explaining*
  - *narration*

- **PERFORMING ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES**
  which includes:
  - *establishing and maintaining procedures and routines*
  - *organising materials*
  - *maintaining records*

- **ASSESSING AND EVALUATING STUDENT BEHAVIOUR**
  which includes:
  - *selecting assessment instruments*
  - *designing and developing assessment instruments*
  - *diagnosing student difficulties or abilities*
  - *involving students in self-evaluation*

Lecturers in the sample were asked to indicate *how well* they taught the skills to the final year students. Table 4.6 is an analysis of their responses.

**TABLE 4.7**

## RANKING OF TEACHING SKILLS ACCORDING TO HOW THEY WERE TAUGHT

| SKILL | % OF LECTURERS WHO SAID THE SKILL WAS TAUGHT WELL |
|---|---|
| Planning instruction | 64% |
| Conducting or implementing instruction | 37% |
| Performing administrative duties | 27% |
| Assessing and evaluating student behaviour | 29% |

According to table 4.7 the order in which the skills can be ranked according to *how well* they were taught starting with the one with the highest percentage, taken to mean that it was the skill *best* taught, is as follows:

- Planning instruction (64%)
- Conducting or implementing instruction - conducting lessons (37%)
- Assessing and evaluating student behaviour (29%)
- Performing administrative duties (27%).

The 73 lecturers in the sample were asked to indicate three skills that their students had difficulty in mastering. The responses to the question by lecturers in each of the five colleges were listed and classified.

Table 4.8 shows the number of responses per college and their percentage for comparison purposes.

**TABLE 4.8**

## LECTURERS' RESPONSES ON SKILLS STUDENTS HAVE PROBLEMS IN MASTERING

| COLLEGE | NO RESPONSES | PERCENTAGE |
|---|---|---|
| 1<br>N = 12 | 18 | 12% |
| 2<br>N = 16 | 47 | 32% |
| 3<br>N = 14 | 21 | 15% |
| 4<br>N = 22 | 42 | 29% |
| 5<br>N = 9 | 17 | 12% |
| ALL<br>N = 73 | 145 | 100% |

Then the responses from each college were classified according to the skill and Table 4.9 is the result of this analysis.

**TABLE 4.9**

# A CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHING SKILLS STUDENTS HAVE DIFFICULTY MASTERING

| | COLLEGES | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **CATE-GORY OF SKILL** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **TOTAL** | **PERCEN-TAGE** |
| Planning instruction | 9 | 4 | 5 | 11 | 1 | 30 | 21% |
| Conduc-ting or implemen-ting instruction | 5 | 36 | 10 | 26 | 15 | 92 | 63% |
| Perfor-ming admin-istrative duties | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 5% |
| Assessing and evaluating student behaviour | 3 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 16 | 11% |
| TOTAL | 18 | 47 | 21 | 42 | 17 | 145 | 100% |

The results of the analysis presented in Table 4.9 show that according to the lecturers in the sample, 63% of the problems students had on teaching skills were on **conducting** or **implementing instruction**, i.e. conducting lessons; 21% of the problems were on skills pertaining to **planning instruction**; 11% of the problems were on skills on **assessment** and **evaluation** and 5% on the performance of **administrative duties.**

Lecturers in the sample were also asked to write three **major** problems that they encounter in their course or subject when teaching student **teaching skills**. Table 4.10 gives the number of responses for each of the five colleges in the sample as well as their percentage of the total responses from the 73 lecturers in the sample for comparison purposes.

**TABLE 4.10**

# PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY LECTURERS WHEN TEACHING ABOUT TEACHING SKILLS

| COLLEGE | NO. OF PROBLEMS | % OF TOTAL NO. OF PROBLEMS |
|---|---|---|
| 1<br>N = 12 | 18 | 16% |
| 2<br>N = 16 | 30 | 26% |
| 3<br>N = 14 | 19 | 17% |
| 4<br>N = 22 | 36 | 31% |
| 5<br>N = 9 | 12 | 10% |
| TOTAL | 115 | 100% |

According to table 4.10, a total of 115 problems were given by the 73 lecturers in the sample taken from the five colleges. These problems were analysed and classified as follows:

- Lack of time for adequate teaching and practice of teaching skills.
- Large numbers of students against few lecturers resulting in large and unmanageable groups.
- Programme deficiencies.
- Inadequacies in the students and negative attitudes.
- Lack of equipment.

The lecturers in the sample were asked to give suggestions on how teaching of teaching skills in their colleges could be improved. Eighty-one suggestions were given. An analysis of these suggestions revealed that the improvement of the teaching skills of teaching centred on the following:

- Improvement of teaching approaches by the lecturers.
- Improvement of course structures and the content.
- Use of video and audio equipment in micro and peer teaching.
- More use of observations and demonstrations by competent lecturers, teachers and students.
- Time management.
- Staff development.
- Manageable staff: student ratios.

The problems identified by lecturers and the suggestions offered for the improvement of the teaching of teaching skills will be taken into account when developing the teaching practice curriculum in this study.

### 4.3.4 Micro-teaching as a method of developing teaching skills

Micro-teaching first developed at Stanford University in U S A, in 1963 (Stones & Morris 1972: 79; Verster & Potgieter 1991: 52; Duminy *et al* 1992: 103), is traditionally viewed as an integral part of a teacher training programme. Some teacher educators use it as a preparation for block teaching practice while there are some, rather few, who take the view that micro-teaching can stand on its own as a teaching skill development procedure.

When micro-teaching was first used at Stanford University, California, U S A in 1963 it was partly because their students did not have opportunities for traditional forms of teaching practice and partly because new ways of training teachers seemed to be needed (Duminy *et al* 1992: 103).

In his paper where he develops the theme that teaching practice is old and ineffective, Neill (1993: 12) argues persuasively using research, that practice in teaching skills can be offered in a better way in the relatively protected conditions of the college. He states:

> *"Obviously the student teacher cannot "practise" in the school. The practice of the novice needs to be done in the college of education program, where* ***mistakes*** *and* ***ideas*** *are valuable openings for discussion and where discussion can occur* ***immediately****. Not only that but the children in the schools will not suffer from the mistakes. The schools, after all, are not there for practice but for* ***professional attention****"* (own emphasis).

While this is rather too extreme a view against teaching practice in schools which can be countered by an equally persuasive argument from research on the positive benefits of school practice, it reflects the view that teaching skills can be developed in students away from the classroom, at college in laboratory conditions whose major approach is **micro-teaching**.

Lecturers in the sample were asked whether they taught micro-teaching in their courses. Table 4.11 is an analysis of their responses to this question.

**TABLE 4.11**

## LECTURERS' RESPONSES TO WHETHER MICRO-TEACHING IS TAUGHT AND PRACTISED IN THEIR COURSES

| | YES | | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **COLLEGE** | **NO** | **%** | **NO** | **%** |
| 1<br>N = 12 | 5 | 42% | 7 | 58% |
| 2<br>N = 16 | 14 | 88% | 2 | 17% |
| 3<br>N = 14 | 11 | 79% | 2 | 14% |
| 4<br>N = 22 | 19 | 86% | 2 | 9% |
| 5<br>N = 9 | 7 | 78% | 2 | 22% |
| TOTAL 73 | 56 | 78% | 15 | 21% |

78% of the lecturers said micro-teaching was taught and practised in their courses, while 21% said it was not.

Students in the sample were asked whether they did micro-teaching during their course. Table 4.12 is an analysis of their responses.

**TABLE 4.12**

## STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO WHETHER THEY DID MICRO-TEACHING DURING THEIR COURSE

| | YES | | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **COLLEGE** | **NO** | **%** | **NO** | **%** |
| 1<br>N = 47 | 44 | 94% | 6 | 13% |
| 2<br>N = 52 | 14 | 27% | 36 | 69% |
| 4<br>N = 29 | 29 | 100% | 0 | 0% |
| 5<br>N = 22 | 20 | 90% | 2 | 10% |
| TOTAL 150 | 107 | 71% | 44 | 29% |

According to table 4.12, the majority of students in four colleges said they did micro-teaching in their course, with percentage responses ranging from 90% to 100%. However 69% of students from one college said they did not do micro-teaching in their course. This was at variance with lecturers from that college, 88% of whom said they taught micro-teaching in their courses. However there was agreement between the students and lecturers in the sample on the teaching and practice of micro-teaching with 71% of students saying they **did** micro-teaching in their course and 78% of the lecturers saying micro-teaching was taught and practised in their subjects/courses.

Lecturers in the sample were asked to rate the success of their micro-teaching programme using the scale: *very successful, successful* and *not successful.* Table 4.13 is an analysis of their responses to this question.

**TABLE 4.13**

## THE LECTURERS' RATING OF THE SUCCESS OF THEIR MICRO-TEACHING PROGRAMME

| | VERY SUCCESSFUL | | SUCCESSFUL | | NOT SUCCESSFUL | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **COLLEGE** | **NO** | **%** | **NO** | **%** | **NO** | **%** |
| 1<br>N = 12 | 1 | 8% | 2 | 17% | 1 | 8% |
| 2<br>N = 16 | 0 | 0% | 5 | 31% | 7 | 43% |
| 3<br>N = 14 | 1 | 7% | 6 | 43% | 7 | 50% |
| 4<br>N = 22 | 4 | 18% | 10 | 45% | 6 | 27% |
| 5<br>N = 9 | 2 | 22% | 4 | 44% | 2 | 22% |
| TOTAL<br>73 | 8 | 11% | 27 | 37% | 23 | 32% |

Lecturers' responses to this question were low, maybe an indication of a failure or reluctance to rate their success in micro-teaching. Only 11% of the lecturers in the sample rated their micro-teaching programme as very **successful,** while 37% rated it as just **successful.** On the whole therefore 48% of the lecturers rated their micro-teaching programme as a **success,** while 32% saw it as **unsuccessful.**

Students on the other hand were asked to rate the **effectiveness** of the micro-teaching programme they were engaged in, in preparing them for fully fledged teaching practice in the schools. The students' responses are analysed in table 4.14.

**TABLE 4.14**

## STUDENTS' RATING OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR MICRO-TEACHING PROGRAMME AS PREPARATION FOR TEACHING PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS

| | VERY EFFECTIVE | | EFFECTIVE | | NOT EFFECTIVE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **COLLEGE** | **NO** | **%** | **NO** | **%** | **NO** | **%** |
| 1<br>N = 47 | 17 | 36% | 23 | 49% | 2 | 4% |
| 2<br>N = 52 | 4 | 8% | 12 | 23% | 2 | 4% |
| 4<br>N = 29 | 16 | 55% | 11 | 38% | 2 | 9% |
| 5<br>N = 22 | 7 | 32% | 10 | 45% | 3 | 14% |
| TOTAL 150 | 44 | 29% | 56 | 37% | 9 | 6% |

According to Table 4.14, 29% of the students rated their micro-teaching practice programme as **very effective**, 37% rated it as effective and 6% rated it as not effective. Just as with lecturers in the sample there were a number of students who did not respond to this question, some because they had indicated in an earlier question that they had not done micro-teaching. On the whole therefore 66% of the students in the sample found their micro-teaching programme **effective**. If we compare this with the 48% of the lecturers who rated their micro-teaching programme as a success, we can conclude that the students found a lot of value and benefit in the exercise even though the lecturers felt they could have done better.

Lecturers were asked to give the major problems they face when mounting a micro-teaching programme in their courses. These problems would have contributed in their micro-teaching programmes not being as successful as they would have wished them to be. An analysis and classification of the seventy seven problems the lecturers mentioned reveals problems centred on:

- Lack of time
- Lack of adequate transport
- Large student numbers
- Shortage of lecturers
- Students' attitudes.

Lecturers in the sample from the five colleges were asked to make some recommendations on how the micro-teaching in their colleges could be improved. An examination of the seventy recommendations given by the 73 lecturers in the sample from five colleges reveals the following as being the common recommendations for the improvement of micro-teaching programmes in the teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe.

- Provision of more time for micro-teaching
- Reducing the sizes of student groups by increasing the number of lecturers
- Providing adequate equipment e.g. video cameras, audio cassettes etc. for filming and recording student micro-teaching for discussion, analysis and evaluation purposes
- Using school pupils for micro-teaching - bringing pupils to the college or busing the students to the schools
- Provision of adequate transport to ferry students to schools and pupils to the college
- Assessing micro-teaching to make students take it seriously

The 150 students in the sample were asked what advice they could give their colleges on the improvement of their micro-teaching programmes. An analysis of the 103 recommendations given by the students in the form of **advice** reveals that the following are the common recommendations given by students for the improvement of micro-teaching in their colleges.

- Micro lessons taught should be **videotaped** so that students can watch themselves and be involved in the analysis of the lessons they would have taught.
- **More time** should be given to micro-teaching.
- All students should be given a chance to do micro-teaching, hence the recommendation for more time.
- School children should be used for micro-teaching.

- Lecturers should teach demonstration lessons using school children so that students can emulate them.
- Adequate transport should be provided so that students can be promptly transported to local schools for micro-teaching and for lecturers to come and work with them - supervise them in schools.
- There should be **lectures** and **literature** on micro-teaching.
- Student groups should be reduced to make it possible for lecturers to closely supervise them and also for students to have more practice lessons to teach.
- The frequency of practice or number of lessons should be increased with students teaching at least two or more micro lessons.
- Students on micro-teaching sessions should be closely supervised and monitored.
- Students should be taught classroom observation techniques.

The problems identified by lecturers and students in the sample and the recommendations made on the improvement of micro-teaching will be taken into account in the development of the teaching practice curriculum in this study.

## 4.4 THE VIEWS OF LECTURERS AND STUDENTS ON THE CURRENT APPROACH TO PEER TEACHING

Peer teaching is usually used to introduce students to actual classroom practice as is the case with micro-teaching. The following advantages of peer teaching as an introduction to the teaching of pupils or as a method of teaching students how to teach have been identified:

- It is a more **relaxed** way of introducing a student to actual teaching
- If the peer-group is well selected students get to **know** each other and provide each other with **support**, **encouragement** and **stimulation** in learning
- The feedback sessions, if well structured and competently handled, can become very effective vehicles for learning how to teach (Ndlovu 1993: 50)

The seventy-three lecturers in the sample from the five colleges were asked whether peer teaching was part of their course. Table 4.15 is an analysis of their responses.

**TABLE 4.15**

## LECTURERS' RESPONSES ON THE INCLUSION OF PEER TEACHING IN THEIR COURSE

| | YES | | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **COLLEGE** | **NO** | **%** | **NO** | **%** |
| ONE N = 12 | 7 | 58% | 5 | 45% |
| TWO N = 16 | 13 | 81% | 2 | 13% |
| THREE N = 14 | 5 | 36% | 7 | 50% |
| FOUR N = 22 | 18 | 82% | 1 | 5% |
| FIVE N = 9 | 8 | 89% | 1 | 11% |
| TOTAL 73 | 51 | 67% | 16 | 23% |

Table 4.15 shows that 67% of the lecturers in the sample from the five colleges said peer teaching was part of their courses.

Lecturers in the sample who conducted both peer teaching and micro-teaching were asked which of the two they found more effective. The majority in the sample singled out micro-teaching. Twenty-four reasons were given as to why micro-teaching was more effective than peer teaching. Most of the reasons given, (66%) stress the point that micro-teaching is closer to real teaching than peer teaching, and hence is taken seriously. These are some of the reasons that indicate micro-teaching's closeness to real teaching:

- *Micro-teaching is more or less a real classroom situation if pupils are used.*
- *There is direct contact with school pupils for the first time for a good number of student teachers.*
- *Students tend to take these more seriously especially when they are in real classroom situations.*

- *Micro-teaching provides the students with a real classroom situation.*
- *Micro-teaching is normally more effective when it involves children.*
- *Students prepare properly, since they know that they will teach real school children in front of colleagues.*

The main reason which was given for peer teaching not being as effective as micro-teaching, is its artificiality and some students' failure to take it seriously and simulate pupils in a classroom situation. These are some of the reasons given that express this view of peer teaching.

- *Since fellowstudents do not behave/respond as pupils would, students are hardly self-assured when 'teaching' fellowstudents.*
- *Most, if not all students find it difficult to assume the role of pupils. This creates an unrealistic teaching-learning situation, hence no effective learning.*

Lecturers were also asked to list problems which they encounter when they conduct peer teaching. Forty-two problems were mentioned. An analysis of these problems reveals that they centre on:

- its artificiality
- failure by students to simulate pupils due to lack of seriousness
- large groups
- lack of time.

Some of the problems mentioned as impeding the effective conducting of peer teaching are the same as those that were mentioned as militating against the effective carrying out of micro-teaching. These are:

- lack of time
- large student numbers in groups/large groups
- student attitude.

Lecturers in the sample were asked to give suggestions on the improvement of peer teaching. An analysis of the forty-one suggestions given, reveals the following common recommendations:

- Course modification to create more time and to slot peer teaching appropriately for effective peer teaching practice. Some see peer teaching as a prelude to micro-teaching.

- Creation of more time to allow for peer teaching practice by **all** students.

- Reduction of student group sizes so as to make it possible for **all** students to practice and to make it possible for all students to be effectively supervised.

- Use of video to record good teachers in the schools for discussion purposes on teaching skills as well as for effective after-lesson evaluation of the lesson by the student and supervisor.

The 152 students in the sample were asked whether they did peer teaching during their course. Table 4.16 is an analysis of the students' responses to this question.

**TABLE 4.16**

## STUDENTS' RESPONSES ON WHETHER THEY DID PEER TEACHING DURING THEIR COURSE

| | YES | | NO | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **COLLEGE** | **NO** | **%** | **NO** | **%** |
| ONE N = 49 | 48 | 98% | 1 | 2% |
| TWO N = 52 | 50 | 96% | 1 | 2% |
| FOUR N = 29 | 28 | 97% | 1 | |
| FIVE N = 22 | 20 | 91% | 2 | 9% |
| TOTAL 152 | 146 | 96% | 5 | 3% |

Table 4.16 shows that the majority of students from each of the four colleges in the sample said they did do peer teaching during their course. The 'Yes" response from students from each of the colleges was over 90%, with 96% of the 152 students in the sample saying they did practise peer teaching in their courses.

A comparison of the students' response to that of lecturers who were asked whether peer teaching was part of their courses shows the following:

| | |
|---|---|
| Students | 96% |
| Lecturers | 67% |

The positive "Yes" response was higher amongst students than among lecturers. The discrepancy might be due to some confusion of micro and peer teaching by some students. Those students in the sample (96%) who had said they did peer teaching during their course were asked to rate its effectiveness. Table 4.17 is an analysis of their responses to this question.

**TABLE 4.17**

## STUDENTS' RATING OF PEER TEACHING

| | VERY EFFECTIVE | | EFFECTIVE | | NOT EFFECTIVE | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| COLLEGE | NO | % | NO | % | NO | % |
| ONE N = 49 | 20 | 41% | 20 | 41% | 7 | 14% |
| TWO N = 52 | 14 | 26% | 18 | 35% | 18 | 35% |
| FOUR N = 29 | 10 | 34% | 15 | 52% | 3 | 10% |
| FIVE N = 22 | 4 | 18% | 8 | 36% | 9 | 41% |
| TOTAL 152 | 48 | 32% | 61 | 40% | 37 | 24% |

According to table 4.17, 32% of the students said peer teaching was very effective, 40% said it was effective and 24% said it was not effective. Overall 72% said it was effective.

Students were asked to give suggestions for the improvement of the peer teaching programme in their colleges. **Ninety-two** suggestions were given. An analysis of these suggestions reveals the following as the common suggestions given:

- More time: students suggest that more time be given for peer teaching as this will fulfil the other suggestion of practice by all students and not by just a few.
- All students should be given a chance to do peer teaching.
- Students suggest an improvement in students' attitude; taking peer teaching seriously, avoiding mocking and making fun of others.
- Students suggest that peer teaching should be practised in all teaching subjects.
- Students also suggest that peer teaching should be closely supervised by lecturers with some going further to suggest that it should be assessed.
- There are some students who suggest that peer teaching should be replaced by micro-teaching, while some go further to acknowledge that where micro-teaching is not possible, peer teaching does offer an alternative.
- There are some students who suggest that it should be stopped altogether as it is not effective.

A comparison of the suggestions made by the lecturers and students in the sample reveals that there are some common suggestions which are given by both lecturers and students. These are:

- that more time be given to peer teaching so as to give all students a chance to practise.
- that all students should have a chance to practise. Apart from giving peer teaching more time, this could be achieved by reducing the sizes of groups of students.
- that student attitude should improve or change with students taking peer teaching seriously and supporting each other rather than making fun of or ridiculing each other.

In the development of the teaching practice curriculum in this study, the suggestions by lecturers and students on the improvement of peer teaching are going to be taken into account.

## 4.5 THE VIEWS OF LECTURERS AND STUDENTS ON THE CURRENT APPROACH TO TEACHING PRACTICE SUPERVISION

Supervision is a major aspect of any teaching practice programme. Both students and lecturers in the sample were asked to give suggestions on how supervision in their colleges could be improved.

The 152 students in the sample gave 307 suggestions for the improvement of supervision in their colleges. The large number of responses here indicates the **value** students place on supervision during their teaching practice. An analysis and classification of these suggestions reveals that the main focus is on the following:

- **The approach to supervision**

  The majority of suggestions from the four colleges centred on the approach to supervision, highlighting what students see as shortcomings and how these could be remedied. The following were mentioned :

  - *Creation of an atmosphere conducive to effective supervision.*
  - *Focusing on supervision rather than assessment, with early visits spent on supervision and later visits on assessment.*
  - *There should be positive dialogue or interaction between the supervisor and student which calls for lecturers to discuss and explain their observations during the supervision, give positive advice, while on the other hand allowing students to justify their actions.*
  - *There were suggestions on the balance between focusing on records and the actual lesson during supervision, with most students suggesting that more focus and emphasis be placed on the lesson taught rather than records. Some went further to advise lecturers to check records more closely, because some students cheat in their records or documentation. Lecturers were advised to check the records closely to see if they reflected a true picture of what had transpired or what had taken place.*

- **Frequency of supervision**

  Students advised their lecturers to visit them more regularly or more frequently.

- **More time**

  During the visits, the lecturers were advised to spend more time with the student and to engage in constructive dialogue with the student on his/her performance and how to improve it.

- **Attitude of lecturers**

  Most students identified a number of indicators of lecturers' negative attitudes towards the students and in their approach to supervision which militated against effective supervision or the creation of an atmosphere conducive to effective supervision. These included, harassment, scolding in front of pupils, harshness, intimidation and negative criticism.

- **Communication on impending supervision**

  Students advised lecturers to inform them of when they would be visiting them for the purpose of supervision. This would remove fear, tension and nervousness from some and afford students time to prepare themselves for the supervision.

Lecturers in the sample were asked to give recommendations for the improvement of the supervision of students on teaching practice. The 73 lecturers gave 112 suggestions which were analysed revealing that the following are the areas needing improvement :

- frequency of visits/supervision
- approach to supervision
- mode of teaching practice
- deployment
- transport
- time

- staffing
- finance
- lecturer relations and orientation
- school supervision
- teaching practice seminars.

A comparison of the suggestions given by students and lecturers on the improvement of teaching practice supervision reveals the following common areas of concern :

- *approach to supervision*
- *frequency of supervision*
- *more time.*

The students in the sample were also concerned about the following:

- *attitude of lecturers*
- *communication on the impending supervision.*

Lecturers, on the other hand, were also concerned about those factors which would facilitate their supervision of the students. Hence they mentioned the following as contributing to the improvement of the supervision of students on teaching practice :

- *deployment*
- *transport*
- *staffing*
- *finance*
- *lecturer relations and orientation*
- *teaching practice seminars.*

The concerns of both lecturers and students about supervision of teaching practice and the recommendations both gave for its improvement will be taken into account in the development of the teaching practice curriculum in this study.

## 4.6 THE VIEWS OF LECTURERS AND STUDENTS ON THE CURRENT APPROACH TO TEACHING PRACTICE ASSESSMENT

Teaching practice assessment is a major aspect of any teaching practice programme. In Zimbabwe, the major criticism of teaching practice programmes has been that students are assessed before they are adequately supervised. In the majority of cases, teaching practice supervision and assessment are carried out simultaneously, with the lecturers and other supervisors finding it easy to assess the student's performance, rather than to supervise him/her as he/she learns and practises teaching skills. In Zimbabwe one can safely assert that assessment is performed more effectively than supervision.

The students in the sample from the four colleges were asked to rate the effectiveness of their assessment by the college and school. Their responses are analysed in Table 4.18.

**TABLE 4.18**

### STUDENTS' RATING OF THEIR ASSESSMENT

| | RATING | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | VERY EFFECTIVE | | | | EFFECTIVE | | | | NOT EFFECTIVE | | | |
| | COLLEGE | | SCHOOL | | COLLEGE | | SCHOOL | | COLLEGE | | SCHOOL | |
| COLLEGE | NO | % | NO | % | NO | % | NO | % | NO | % | NO | % |
| ONE N = 49 | 19 | 39% | 23 | 47% | 22 | 45% | 22 | 45% | 7 | 14% | 2 | 4% |
| TWO N = 52 | 22 | 42% | 17 | 33% | 26 | 50% | 24 | 46% | 3 | 6% | 8 | 15% |
| FOUR N = 29 | 20 | 71% | 10 | 34% | 6 | 20% | 10 | 34% | 1 | 3% | 7 | 24% |
| FIVE N = 22 | 10 | 45% | 3 | 14% | 4 | 18% | 2 | 9% | 1 | 5% | 1 | 5% |
| TOTAL N = 152 | 71 | 47% | 53 | 35% | 58 | 38% | 58 | 38% | 12 | 8% | 18 | 12% |

According to table 4.18, 47% of the students rated their assessment by college lecturers as very effective and 38% as effective, making 85% of the students in the sample rate their assessment by college lecturers as effective. On school assessment 35% of the students in the sample rated it as very effective, while 35% rated it as effective. This means that 70% of the students rated school assessment as effective. Comparing the percentages for the rating of college and school assessment, more students rated college assessment as effective than school supervision. On the whole, students were satisfied in the way they were assessed by both the college and the school.

Lecturers in the sample were asked to write down problems which they encountered when assessing students on teaching practice. A comparison and analysis of the 103 problems of assessment identified by lecturers in the sample reveals that the common problems lecturers face include:

- shortage of time
- lack of adequate transport
- problems with the assessment instrument and approach to assessment
- deployment of students in distant schools
- problems with school-based assessment i.e. from headmasters and class teachers.

The lecturers in the sample were asked to write down suggestions for the improvement of the assessment of students at their colleges. An examination of the suggestions given by the lecturers reveals that the following were highlighted:

- The improvement of the assessment instrument
- More emphasis on school assessment
- Student preparation for teaching practice
- Improvement of transport
- Deployment of students close to college
- Improvement of approach to supervision
- Improvement of lecturer performance through staff development and team teaching
- Improvement of attitude of assessors
- More time for assessment
- Approach to assessment
- Communication between college and school.

## 4.7 STUDENTS' CRITICISMS OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMME

The students in the sample were asked to write criticisms about their teaching practice programmes. The purpose of the question was to get from students those aspects of their teaching practice that needed to be improved. The 132 criticisms that were given were analysed and classified as follows:

- Frequency of supervision and assessment which needs to be increased
- Lack of time for effective supervision and assessment
- Bias in assessment
- Post-lesson discussion, which is not done in most cases or is hurried
- Approach to supervision
- Lecturers' negative attitude
- Deployment
- Notification about impending visit, which is not done
- Too much paper work/too many records.

## 4.8 STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMMES

Students from the four colleges in the sample were asked, after criticising the teaching practice programmes in their colleges, to give suggestions for the improvement of the teaching practice programmes. The 255 suggestions which were given were analysed and the analysis revealed that the following were the areas that needed to be improved according to the students:

- **Supervision** where the areas of focus were:
  - *frequency*
  - *post-lesson discussion*
  - *lecturers' attitudes.*
- **Assessment** where the areas of focus were:
  - *frequency*
  - *notification about the impending visit*
  - *improvement of lecturers' attitudes*
  - *approach to assessment.*

- **Deployment** where areas of focus included:
  - *deploying more than one student per school for sharing of ideas*
  - *not deploying students in remote schools.*
- The **headmaster's role** where the focus included:
  - *their assessment being taken seriously and incorporated in the final assessment of students*
  - *their orientation and training for their role in teaching practice.*
- Peer teaching
- Micro-teaching
- Communication between the college and practising schools and students and supervising lecturers
- Observation
- Understanding and solving student problems
- Preparation for teaching practice
- Availability of literature on teaching practice
- Reduction of paperwork/documentation required from students on teaching practice
- Holding of teaching practice and problem seminars.

The criticisms of the teaching practice programmes by students as well as their recommendations for improving teaching practice are to be taken into account when developing the curriculum in this study.

## 4.9 RESUMÉ

In this chapter, the current teaching practice situation in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe was examined. This examination involved a description of the teaching practice process and an evaluation of some of its critical aspects to highlight areas that need improvement. A survey of the views of lecturers and students was done again to find out what problems lecturers and students have with the prevailing teaching practice approach. Suggestions on how the areas of weakness identified could be improved were sought from both the lecturers and students. The aim here was to incorporate these suggestions into the proposed teaching practice curriculum that is discussed in detail in the following chapter.

# CHAPTER FIVE

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM FOR TEACHERS' COLLEGES IN ZIMBABWE

# CHAPTER FIVE

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM FOR TEACHERS' COLLEGES IN ZIMBABWE

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter two a **conceptual framework** for curriculum development was constructed. This conceptual framework is the one that will be used in this chapter to develop a teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. The construction of the conceptual framework involved an elucidation of the influence of aims of education on curriculum theory, the conceptualisation of curriculum phenomena, as well as an examination of curriculum foundations and models of curriculum development. It ended with the adoption of a curriculum model to be used in the development of the proposed teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. The purpose of the detailed exposition of fundamental curriculum issues in developing the conceptual framework for the proposed curriculum was basically to put it into the context of trends in the area of curriculum development.

In chapter three, the focus was on the **conceptualisation** of the teaching practice curriculum. This involved the examination of some philosophical foundations of teaching practice as well as theoretical contexts of the teaching practice curriculum. The discussion concluded with the adoption of a **structural** framework for the teaching practice curriculum to be developed for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. While in chapter two the underlying objective was to arrive at **a conceptual** framework for the teaching practice curriculum to be developed, in chapter three the focus was on the development of the **structural** framework and the examination of curriculum issues in teacher education. In chapter four the current situation in teaching practice in Zimbabwe was discussed. The purpose of this was to bring to the fore what the current situation is like which the curriculum that is being developed in this study is supposed to improve. The stage has therefore been set for the onerous task of developing the proposed teaching practice

curriculum. Further discussion, elucidation and in some cases justification of structures, elements and theoretical tenets of the curriculum will be made where this is deemed necessary, while reference to discussions already made will be done through crossreferencing.

## 5.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM FOR TEACHERS' COLLEGES IN ZIMBABWE

A brief discussion of the justification for the development of the teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe is necessary at this stage, mainly to draw together threads on the issue that have been woven in the first four chapters of this study. A previous study, with a focus on a critical analysis of the teaching practice model in Zimbabwe's teachers' colleges clearly revealed a need for the development of a teaching practice curriculum (see par. 1.2.1). This would set in motion moves to resolve weaknesses and problems in the current approach to teaching practice which include lack of co-ordination of teaching courses or units taught in various departments, duplication, poor time management and unsatisfactory supervision and assessment of students. Secondly, while within teacher education worldwide, it is accepted that teaching practice is a major component of the teacher education programme, and while in Zimbabwe this perception is shared in all organs involved with teacher education; teachers' colleges, the University of Zimbabwe's Department of Teacher Education and the Ministry of Higher Education, the practical implementation of the teacher education programmes reveals the opposite. Teaching practice is an appendage to the theoretical courses, giving credence to the long discarded notion that thorough preparation of students in the theoretical and methods courses is all that is needed before students are placed in schools to do teaching practice. The development of a teaching practice curriculum will therefore place teaching practice in its proper place within the teacher education programmes and resolve most of the weaknesses and problems presently dogging teacher educators in Zimbabwe. Most of all this will enhance the quality of training students receive in teachers' colleges with a ripple effect of improving their teaching in schools.

## 5.3 THE PROPOSED TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM

In chapter two (2.6) a curriculum model for the development of the teaching practice curriculum was adopted. The model adopted is basically a cyclical model which has the advantage of being rational and flexible. The rationality of the model allows for a scientific, logical and sequential approach, while the flexibility derives from the dynamism of the interactional models. The development of the curriculum is carried out within the context of three broad phases of organisation, development and application. Phase one, **organisation**, has in part been accomplished within the discussion carried out in chapters two, three and four. Phase two, **development**, is being done now, while phase three, which is **application**, will in the first instance be in form of recommendations for the adoption and use of this developed curriculum as it is or in a modified form.

The principles underpinning the curriculum being developed were discussed in chapter three (par. 3.4.1) and they will now be implemented in the development of the teaching practice curriculum.

### 5.3.1 Foundations of the teaching practice curriculum

In chapter three (par. 3.4.1.1) the first principle was stated, namely that the teaching practice curriculum has to be founded on a firm **theoretical basis**. This theoretical foundation of the teaching practice curriculum is embedded in the following disciplines within teacher education programmes in Zimbabwe :

- The professional theory taught and studied in the educational foundation courses which include educational psychology, sociology and philosophy.
- The academic theory taught and studied in the subject specialisations or subjects to be taught.
- The practical theory studied in methods or curriculum courses, now also referred to as professional studies.

- The new area being suggested; which is the theory of practice, in general and teaching practice in particular to be taught and studied within the teaching practice departments.

A brief discussion of the topics and themes to be covered in this foundation theory follows.

The examples being used are taken from three documents :

- *The Primary Teacher Education Syllabus and Regulations document of 1978.*
- *The Report of the Teacher Education Review Committee of 1986.*
- *The Handbook on Student Teaching in Secondary Schools of 1983.*

The three documents are major landmarks in the development of teacher education in Zimbabwe at the dawn of independence - just prior to 1980 and during the early post independent era. The first, the Primary Teacher Education Syllabuses and Regulations document laid the foundations of the present primary teacher education curriculum. The second, the Report of the Teacher Education Review Committee, summarised a nationwide debate on the teacher education curriculum review. The third, the Handbook on Student Teaching in Secondary Schools, was a product of the work of the University of Zimbabwe's Department of Teacher Education, then known as the Associate College Centre, and secondary teachers' colleges whose major objective was **to influence** and **improve** the **quality** of teacher preparation.

### *5.3.1.1 Teaching practice elements in the professional foundations syllabi*

The content coverage of the courses offered within professional foundations in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe are wide and varied from college to college. What is done here is to glean typical examples of content that have a direct bearing on the teaching practice curriculum. In the preamble to the Professional Foundations Syllabus in the Primary Teacher Education Syllabus and regulations document it is stated:

> *Professional Foundations includes those elements of theory and related practices which explain and embody the essential purposes and functions of education, **along with those which relate to the interaction of teachers and pupils in learning situations*** (1978: 5) (own emphasis).

The last part of this statement refers to those elements of the syllabus with a **direct** bearing on the teaching practice curriculum. Out of **sixteen** general programme aims of Teacher Education given in the Teacher Education Review Document (1986: 21 - 22), the following have a direct bearing on the teaching practice curriculum:

- To ensure that persons preparing to teach demonstrate functional insight into the teaching/learning process.
- To promote awareness of the roles of teachers in the learning process.
- To sensitize students to the needs and characteristics of effective learners of various ages and abilities.
- To educate teachers who are able to design curricula that reflect the new social order and promote the philosophy of education with production.
- To ensure that students develop evaluation skills as well as resourceful abilities to implement innovative educational programmes.

In support of the syllabus guidelines for Theory of Education, the Review Committee (1986: 25) made the statement that gives a clear justification of the purpose of studying Theory of Education. The justification underlines the assertion that the theory enhances the practice of the student teacher. They stated that student teachers should acquire solid grounding in the theory of education to understand the reasoning behind the **teaching methods** they use as classroom practitioners (1986: 25).

The following objectives with a direct bearing on the teaching practice curriculum were among those given (1986: 27). Students were expected to acquire an understanding and appreciation of:

- The ways in which children develop and learn.
- Human relationships in schools, the most central of which are the processes of interaction between teachers and students.
- The varied and changing roles of the teacher.
- The knowledge of curriculum design, implementation and refinement.
- Testing and evaluation techniques.

- Planning and implementing learning experiences for children in keeping with their abilities and stages of development.
- Supervising classes of heterogeneous or homogenous ability groupings.
- Motivating children to learn and to think critically.
- Developing productive relationships with colleagues, children's parents and the local community in general.
- Demonstrating resourcefulness in the use of learning aids.
- Using a wide variety of teaching strategies; determining which options are the most appropriate for given learning situations.

In summary therefore, the following topics or content areas are typical examples of elements in the Professional Foundations or Theory of Education syllabi with a direct bearing on the teaching practice curriculum.

- **Psychology of Education**
  - Learning and learning theories
  - Motivation
  - Human development: physical, mental, emotional, moral and social.
- **Sociology of Education**
  - Society and social institutions
  - The roles of the teacher
  - The family and education
  - Education and social change
  - The school and society.
- **Philosophy of Education**
  - Education
  - Discipline
  - Freedom and authority in Education.

The examples given under each area of study are by no means exhaustive. They are given to show how elements of the teaching practice curriculum in the Theory of Education component of the course can be systematically integrated with the core elements of the teaching practice

curriculum. It is very crucial that liaison between the teaching practice department and the theory of education department takes place so that the theoretical elements of the teaching practice curriculum are synchronised with their practical elements being taught within the teaching practice department.

Three examples of how the teaching practice elements within theory of education could be integrated with the teaching practice elements follow. In the psychology of education students can in the first month of first term in their first year be introduced to learning and learning theories as well as child development. During this time students could be introduced to observation as a technique and to various observation techniques. Through close liaison between the lecturers in the two areas, practical observation sessions in a school or schools could then be organised. This would be followed by college discussions of the data collected in the schools within the context of the relevant areas. Psychology lecturers would use the information gathered to build on their lectures and discussions of learning theories, while the teaching practice department could use the information to analyse teaching techniques and learning approaches. This approach ensures the integration of the theory and practice as well as actively involving the students in finding out about teaching and learning. The second approach differs from the first in terms of timing. The theoretical elements in theory of education are taught first. Then a practical session in schools follows where students are, through guided tasks, involved in finding out the validity of what they studied at college. The third approach is where students are given observation sheets with guided focus on what to look for in the classroom or school. What they gather through these observation sessions then becomes the context of lectures and discussions that take place back at college. The advantage of this approach is that it uses the students' curiosity and as a discovery learning approach can highly motivate the students if the observation tasks are well directed and the students well prepared on observation techniques to be able to record the data as it unfolds in the schools and classroom.

### *5.3.1.2 Teaching practice elements in professional studies*

The term **professional studies** is a relatively new term in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges. It has replaced the term **applied education** which in turn had replaced the term **methods**. Applied Education described the course coverage in the area which literally meant the practice or application of the theory students would have been studying in the Theory of Education courses. The old term of methods, was a narrow term, referring to the teaching of students various methods of teaching suitable for particular subjects. The new term of Professional Studies is a *broader* and more *comprehensive* term that places the focus on the students' development of the professional roles of a teacher. Teaching methods and skills are encompassed within the term, so is the effective application of theory of education studied. The term however also encompasses all the roles of the teacher inside and outside the school. So in his college studies the student is introduced to those professional roles critical for starting him off on his career. He is given a chance to learn and practise those roles, such as the classroom roles that are necessary to start him off in his professional career of teaching.

There are a lot of elements therefore within professional studies, that have a direct relevance to the teaching practice curriculum. These include the following :

- Teaching plans
- Syllabuses and schemes
- Records of work
- Student records
- Teaching methods
- Assessment
- Class organisation and management
- Learning and teaching media.

According to the Primary Teacher Education Syllabuses and Regulations document (1978: 11) Applied Education courses are meant to provide students with a grasp of the learning concepts applicable to each subject in order to relate these to the learners being taught and to acquire the **knowledge** and **skills** relevant to successful teaching as well as **evaluating the methodology involved.**

The content covered in professional studies *directly* relates to the practical elements of the teaching practice curriculum. The teaching, research and discussion of topics within professional studies logically lead to practice in the school or with students who could be brought to the college. The following is therefore recommended to forge an effective working link between professional studies and the teaching practice department.

- There has to be a synchronisation of the course programmes of the two areas, so that where students need to start with observation or practical work in schools or with students, this is facilitated by the teaching practice department.

- If the approach adopted is the teaching and discussion of the theory and practice involved in a topic followed by a practical session in the schools or with students brought to college, liaison between the two departments is necessary.

A logical sequence of coverage of a topic would take the following form :

Within professional studies :

- the topic would be introduced to the students

- students would do research on the topic and discussions would follow directed by the lecturer

- there would also be an examination of the topic within the context of psychological learning principles

- students would now be ready to engage in practical work with students in schools.

The teaching practice department would then be involved as follows:

- Working with the lecturers in professional studies (or in some cases the lecturers in professional studies would be the same lecturers belonging to the teaching practice department), students would be organised for practising sessions in schools or with students brought to college.

- Appropriate teaching and learning apparatus and teaching aids would also be constructed or prepared for use in the school practice.

It should be apparent from the discussion so far that a lot of consultation adjustment of topic coverage and timing across departments or subjects is crucial for the implementation of an

effective teacher education curriculum that has an established teaching practice department. Without this close consultation and synchronisation of topic coverage and timing or scheduling, there would be problems of duplication, gaps in student knowledge and skills development, as well as conflicting signals on approaches, methods and skills which are developed. It is of paramount importance that **all** topics that have a **direct** bearing on teaching practice or that require students to have practical sessions in schools or with students brought to the college be synchronised within the teaching practice course programme. One way of making sure of this is for other departments to feed to the teaching practice department topics with practical elements that they will cover in their syllabuses and course programmes and when during the course, year and term these need to be covered. The teaching practice department would then synchronise all these topics and build them into their course programme so as to ensure that students handle the topics and practical experiences in a cohesive, developmental and logical sequence.

The teaching practice department would also have to ensure that the necessary practical skills, such as observation techniques, essential for the students' effective practical experiences and exercises with students in schools have been covered before students engage in practical work in schools. Failure to do so would undermine the college teaching programme and be a waste of valuable college and school time.

**Planning** meetings between the teaching practice department and other departments are essential at various levels and stages of the course to ensure an effective preparation of students for teaching. The crucial stages include at the beginning of the course (year one) where the whole course over two or three years could be reviewed and the synchronisation of the practical elements of the course would be done in broad terms; at the beginning of **the year** to agree on what would be covered; *in which of the three terms*, then at the beginning of **each term** to work out the finer details of timing - *in which week and for how long.*

## 5.3.2 Aims and Objectives of the Teaching Practice Curriculum

The second principle identified in chapter three (see par. 3.4.1.2) as undergirding the teaching practice curriculum being proposed is that it should be built from clear **aims and objectives.**

It has already been pointed out that a major criticism of teaching practice programmes over the years has been their failure to have well thought out and articulated intent (see par. 3.4.2.1). It was further suggested how the aims and objectives of teaching practice could be developed in a meaningful manner so as to give guidance and clear direction on the implementation of the teaching practice curriculum. (3.4.2.1)

According to Turney *et al* (1977: 35) the fundamental aim of teaching practice is to facilitate the acquisition of the teacher's role by the student. This requires not only the opportunity to practise in realistic situations, but the acquisition by the students of specific skills and techniques, the willingness to subject behaviours to critical appraisal and the capacity to analyse a task and adopt the most appropriate procedures. Turney *et al* (1985: 4 - 5) gave the following goals or aims of teaching practice which they say revealed a surprising amount of agreement between tertiary staff and teachers on what they considered as practicum goals. They are quoted here as some of the typical aims of teaching practice.

To provide the student with opportunities to :

- develop greater understanding of children
- develop skills to establish an appropriate understanding of children
- experience success in teaching situations and so acquire confidence
- develop effective teaching skills and strategies
- develop the ability to plan and organise for teaching
- develop a capacity for self-evaluation
- develop knowledge and understanding of school curricula.

According to Calderhead and Gates (1993: 2) education programmes based on notions of **reflective practice** frequently espouse one or more of the following aims :

- to enable teachers to analyse, discuss, evaluate and change their own practice, adopting an analytical approach towards teaching;
- to foster teachers' appreciation of the social and political contexts in which they work, helping teachers to recognize that teaching is socially and politically situated and that the teacher's task involves an appreciation and analysis of that context;
- to enable teachers to appraise the moral and ethical issues implicit in classroom practices, including the critical examination of their own beliefs about good teaching;
- to encourage teachers to take greater responsibility for their own professional growth and to acquire some degree of professional autonomy;
- to facilitate teachers' development of their own theories of educational practice, understanding and developing a principled basis for their own classroom work;
- to empower teachers so that they may better influence future directions in education and take a more active role in educational decision-making.

Calderhead and Gates (1993: 3) also observed that in implementing these aims, a variety of *reflective tools* such as action research, reflective journals, the use of theory and research evidence to interpret practice, and coaching have been used.

It is worth mentioning that while the aims of teaching practice have to be comprehensive, it is necessary to concentrate on those aspects that will introduce the student to the teaching profession and leave others for self-development in the field and through inservice courses. An attempt to cover a wide array of aims is likely to result in a superficial coverage of the aims.

### 5.3.3 The Content of the proposed teaching practice curriculum

In chapter two (see par. 2.6.2.3) curriculum content was discussed as the third stage of the cyclical model of curriculum development. Two conceptualisations of curriculum content were identified. These were the narrow concept which equates content to **knowledge** that is, *facts, concepts* and *generalisations* related to a particular subject and the broader and more

comprehensive concept of content which sees it not only as knowledge but also as *skills, processes* and *values.* It is this broader conceptualisation of content that is adopted in this study. The content of the teaching practice curriculum embraces :

- knowledge i.e. facts, concepts, principles, definitions and generalisations
- skills and processes
- values

In chapter three (see par. 3.4.2.2) it was stated that within the discussion of the teaching practice curriculum content, its sequence, phases and timing should be included. These issues are tackled in the proposal of the teaching practice curriculum content. It is further pointed out that the **contexts** of the teaching practice curriculum are the teachers' college and the school. Therefore the suggested content for the teaching practice curriculum will be so structured as to indicate its context, whether it is the college or the school. This will be done concurrently with the sequencing, phasing and timing of the content coverage.

### *5.3.3.1 An identification of topics and themes of the teaching practice curriculum*

It is important at this stage to identify the topics and themes that are seen to be part of the content of the teaching practice curriculum. It is also worth reiterating that the teaching practice curriculum content has **theoretical** as well as **practical** aspects to it. The approach proposed in the teaching of the curriculum developed in this study, is where the theory (principles, rationale etc.) of the topic being tackled is introduced first, where after it is followed by the practice. It should be noted however that some topics or themes might be best handled by involving the students in some guided practice especially of an observational nature, then followed by a discussion of the theory involved, before engaging the students in sustained practical work.

The broad topics or themes of the teaching practice curriculum content proposed in this study are:

- The theory - practice relationship in teacher education
- Observation
- Roles of a teacher
- Teaching skills
- Approaches to the development of teaching skills
- Micro-teaching
- Peer teaching
- School practice
- Supervision
- Assessment

The sequence or order of coverage of the topics can be flexible, however a sequence shall be proposed later. It is necessary at this stage to discuss each proposed topic or theme briefly in order to indicate the detail that is seen as essential as well as make suggestions on areas of focus.

*i) The theory-practice relationship in teacher education*

It is very important for student teachers to clearly conceptualise the relationship of theory and practice in teacher education. While this very important theme can be tackled in the theory of education course where in a logical introduction to that course, the basic question of **"Why teach theory of Education ?"** needs to be examined, and in the answer to this question an exploration of the theory - practice relationship is done, the theory - practice relationship also needs to be explored within the teaching practice curriculum. The teaching practice curriculum needs to explore this relationship with students to lay the foundation for the practice that will follow. Students need to engage in a systematic inquiry or deliberation, into the following basic questions (Fish 1989: 15):

- What is the role of practice in professional training, and can it be improved ?
- What helps students as they attempt to learn through practice, and how can such help be improved ?
- How can those who seek to assist students to learn through practice improve that assistance?

The following sub-topics or themes can be explored with students in order for them to conceptualise the theory-practice relationship :

- What is theory ?
- What is practice ?
- The traditional view of education theory.
- The modern view of theory of practice.
- What theories do teachers need to know ?
- The various views of the theory - practice relationship

Students need to be engaged in this discussion and exploration of the theory - practice relationship in order to be able to answer the following questions for themselves:

- What theory or theories do I need to facilitate and illuminate my practice of teaching?
- How can I best acquire this theory or theories ?
- What help do I need in the process of learning this theory or theories ?

*ii) Observation*

Observation plays a crucial role in teacher education, and specifically in teaching practice. Three broad aspects of observation in teacher education can be identified. First there is school observation, which as preparation for the teaching process introduces the student to the actual environment where he will eventually work. It brings him into contact with the school community, the children he will teach, the teachers he will practise under and the headmaster who runs the school. Second, is classroom observation where the student observes what is going on in the classroom; the teacher at work teaching and the students learning. For classroom observation to be beneficial, it has to be planned systematically, with the purposes of the observation programme well articulated. Specific objectives have to be spelt out and the programme should have a discernible, developmental structure which leads the student to the actual teaching practice.

Observation visits can be very disruptive to school programmes and frustrating to both the students and the teachers in whose classes they are to carry out the observation tasks. As Fish (1989: 104) aptly states :

*"Students often do not know what to look for in classrooms, and cannot see what they are looking at. It certainly means latent frustration for teachers involved, who often neither receive nor contribute to any evaluation and deliberation and who despite shouldering most of the responsibilities* ***in situ****, have no idea what the students either have or should have learnt from their experience in school, nor of how it relates to the rest of the training course".*

Tomlinson (1995: 179) also makes this critical assertion about **undirected** observation by students when he states :

*"Even when placed directly in a working classroom for a couple of weeks, there is evidence that beginning students don't tend to learn much from the experience as such. It just is difficult for any novice to see what a skilled performer is doing, to distinguish the various components of the action".*

Tomlinson (1995: 179) then suggests the following as pre-requisites for *meaningful* and *effective* observation:

- Providing guidance regarding how and what to observe
- Giving as full access to the action as possible
- Providing some sort of record in the form of open ended notes by the student or using an observation record form or schedule.

The third aspect of observation is the one students might engage in at college when they engage in simulated teaching activities like peer teaching and micro teaching. Here they would be observing each other "teach". Fish (1989: 104) argues that of itself, the basic strategy of observing a teacher and a class might or might not be a useful tool in learning to teach. She points out that it is **what** is involved in the activity of observation, the **quality** of the observations, and the short- and long-term **uses** to which these are put by the student, which affect the **quality of the training** and ultimately, possibly, the **quality** of the **student's teaching**.

Observation techniques are crucial for effective and beneficial observation. The **objective** of the observation and the **specific situation** to be observed will determine the observation technique to be used. Acheson and Gall (1992) suggested the following techniques which lend themselves to a wide spectrum of observation situations and purposes.

- **Selective verbatim**, which is a word for word written record of what is said in a selected observation situation.
- **Seating Chart Observation Records** which are a record of patterns of teacher-student interaction, verbal flow, student and/or teacher movement, and at-task behaviours using a seating chart.
- **Wide Lens Techniques** which are records of teaching phenomena using notes taken during classroom observation or video and audio recordings.

Another well researched and developed system of classroom observation technique is interaction analysis which was developed by Flanders (Amidon 1967; Stones & Morris 1972; Watson & Osibodu 1987). Interaction analysis analyses the instructional process (Amidon 1967: v). According to Stones and Morris (1972: 103) the Flanders system attempts to categorize all verbal behaviour to be found in the classroom with its main categories being teacher talk and pupil talk. Watson and Osibodu (1987: 21) see the Flanders technique as providing an observer of classroom events with a framework within which to interpret events as well as with a recording technique.

On the selection of observation techniques Fish (1989: 106) suggests that the technique chosen should suit the purpose of observation and should be chosen from a range of techniques. The choice of the technique should be made in cognisance of:

- the possibilities of the techniques chosen and their limitations (including issues of interpretation and recording)
- the value of debriefing as part of the learning process
- the importance of the students' reflections
- the problems involved in learning a practical activity
- the problems of designing training courses and techniques

If observation is to be of benefit as a learning-to-teach activity, the process of observation itself has to be effectively handled: the **purpose/objectives** have to be clear to the student the teacher and lecturer, and the situations to be observed i.e. **the focus** of the observation has to be clearly delineated, the appropriate observation **techniques** have to be chosen and the students given practice in their efficient use of the technique to record the data and information. This logically leads to the critical stage in the learning cycle, which is the **debriefing, deliberation** and **reflection** on what was observed.

The following sub-topics on observation would be an area of focus within this section of the teaching practice curriculum:

- **The theory of observation :**
  - The concept of observation.
  - Observation as a learning process in learning how to teach.
  - The purposes of observation in the process of learning to teach.
- **Observation techniques:**

  Some examples are :
  - Selective *verbatim*
  - Observation records based on seating charts
  - Wide lens techniques like detailed notes of what transpired in the classroom, audio and video recordings.
  - Interaction analysis.
- **Practical exercises in the use of the observation techniques.**

  (This can be done in college - observing lectures in session, observing fellow students engaged in micro or peer teaching or in schools).
- **School observation.**
  - Guided observation to be aware of the school environment and social climate. This is in preparation for sustained or block teaching practice.
  - To meet and get to know the members of the school - headmaster, the teachers, pupils, then to focus on the significant members: the

headmaster, deputy head, the class teacher or head of department, the librarian, etc.

- **Classroom observation**

  - Observation of the teacher at work, his teaching methods and style, class control and discipline, his routines, his relationship with the pupils.
  - Children's behaviour and responses to the teacher.
  - Class records and other relevant documents and how they are maintained.

Classroom observation will be followed by the student's assistance of the teacher, then eventually by a phase in taking over of the class as the student engages in sustained or block teaching practice.

*iii)* *Roles of a Teacher*

**Role** is a sociological concept closely linked to the concept of **status.** In simple terms, status refers to a social position one holds while role refers to the behaviour expected of the person because of the status he holds. Horton and Hunt (1964: 99) define status as the **rank** or **position** of an individual or group and role as the **behaviour** expected of one who holds a certain status. Zanden (1990: 43) explains it thus; "Quite simply the difference between a status and a role is that we *occupy* a status and *play* a role". Another way of explaining the concept of role is that it is a number of **norms** or **social rules** which define how an individual holding a particular status is expected to act (Haralambos 1991: 7).

Related concepts pertinent to this discussion are :

- **Role performance** (Zanden 1990: 44) or **role behaviour** (Horton and Hunt 1964: 100) which refers to the actual behaviour of the person who occupies the status. There might be a variation in what is *expected* of a person occupying a role and his *actual* behaviour.

- **Role set** which refers to multiple roles (Zanden 1990: 45) or number of associated roles which fit together (Horton & Hunt 1964: 100).

"**Teacher**" in sociological terms is a *status* and teachers have roles **ascribed** to them by society which they are expected to fulfil. It is the role of teacher education to make the student teachers aware of these roles of teachers and to socialise them to these roles. While it is appreciated that the concept of "**teacher's role(s)**" should be covered in depth in the sociology of education, its inclusion in the teaching practice curriculum is because of its *direct* relevance to the students' practice in the school. Here is an example where close liaison and consultation between departments that was discussed in 5.3.1 comes into play. The head of the teaching practice department or the course co-ordinator has to be aware of when the topic of **teachers' roles** is or was covered in the sociology of education and the content of such sessions, so as to build on to what was done and to tailor his reinforcement of issues dealt with or use them as springboards of the coverage of this topic in preparation for the school practice or school observation. The coverage of the topic within the teaching practice curriculum is therefore more **focused** and geared towards the practical application of the knowledge gained as well as further investigation and observation within the school setting.

Teachers' roles can best be studied within the context of the community, the school and classroom. The school is part of the community in which it is situated and is influenced by as well as influences the community it serves (Turney *et al* 1985: 42). In the school the teacher's accomplishment of "playing" of his role is influenced by the school adult community expectations - the headmasters and other teachers and members of staff, as well as the students, especially those he teaches (Turney *et al* 1985: 40). The teaching practice curriculum gives the students opportunities to study the teachers' roles in the school, and the expectations of administrators, colleagues and students. It also gives students a chance to be introspective and to analyse their own expectations and reactions to the demands of the school community.

A study of the teachers' roles will give the student teacher an appreciation of what it means to be a teacher, the challenges it entails and the problems that go with the job, profession, and status. Turney *et al* (1985: 51) rightly argue that it is no longer acceptable to concentrate teacher education programmes on a narrow range of

classroom roles but that programmes and their practicums must provide student teachers with a realistic understanding of the wide range of roles they will be called upon to play. The key word is **realistic** because there has to be a guard against overwhelming the students with detail at the onset, overlooking the fact that teacher education is only an initiation into a life-long educational and professional development process. In pre-service programmes students are to be introduced to those key elements in their profession and in this case those roles that will come into play on the onset. This does counteract the common complaint of student teachers of being plunged into the deep end when they start their practice in schools.

It is now possible to propose sub-topics or themes that can be explored in the teaching practice curriculum within the broad theme or topic of teachers' roles. These are :

- The role concept and related concepts.
- Research findings in the area of teachers' roles.
- Roles of the teacher in the community and society.
- Roles of the teacher in the school.
- Roles of the teacher in the classroom.
- Observations of teachers in schools as they fulfil their roles.

*iv)* *Teaching Skills*

The justification of including teaching among the professions is its claim to **skills** as the basis of effective teaching practice. A teacher is a *skilled* person in the same manner that a doctor of medicine is or a lawyer is skilled. Teaching skills therefore form the foundation of the profession of teaching. The practice of teaching articulated through the teaching practice curriculum is the basis of teacher education. In support of the skills base of teaching, Gibson (1976: 2 - 3) based her book **"Psychology for the Classroom"** on what she termed "entirely different and much more optimistic set of assumptions" which were:

- that good teaching is not due to a 'knack' but rather the acquisition of **teaching skills** and,
- that these skills can be **defined** and **taught** (own emphasis).

Gibson went further to point out that the skills required of teachers are as varied and complex as the environment in which teachers work. Outlining **all** behaviours needed in each specific teaching situation was hardly possible, and even if possible, would have been undesirable. She therefore suggested that what is needed is to learn the **general** categories of skills that are related to good teaching (own emphasis). Gibson (1976: 2 - 3) clusters these skills thus :

- Skill in subject matter content.
- Skill in applying psychological principles.
- Skill in the learning-teaching process.

There have been modern trends in teacher education that play down the technical skills and competencies base of teacher education while arguing for new trends in the development of teacher education. A case in point is the reflective teacher movement. Valli (1992: xi), in her introduction of a text **"Reflective Teacher Education: Cases and Critiques"**, refers to Lainer and Little (1986) who in their review of research on teacher education, use the terms **technical**, **fragmented** and **shallow** to characterize a curriculum they perceive as having been **relatively static** over the past few decades (own emphasis). The technical aspect of the curriculum referred to is the competency-based approach that emphasises teaching skills. While there is no doubt that reflection as a concept and reflective teaching have a great impact in the development of teaching as well as teacher education, a **skills base** of teaching and teacher education is necessary as a **foundation** for the profession of teaching. The development of teaching skills is therefore a major feature of any teaching practice curriculum. This skills development can be tackled at two levels, the **theoretical** and the **practical.** The theoretical level involves the description of the skill, its psychological base and any other factors that impinge on its efficient execution.

The theoretical level also involves the necessary analysis of the **motions** or **components** of the skill and hence the breaking down of the skill to these components which in a way comprise the skills cycle. The **theoretical** level of skills acquisition and development or skills learning coincides with Perrott's (1982) in Kyriacou (1991:

13) first of the three stages of skills acquisition which is **cognitive** and involves developing an awareness, by **study** and **observation** of what the skill is, identifying its various elements and their sequencing, knowing the purpose of using the skill and knowing how it will benefit teaching. The **practical** level involves the practice in executing the skill through the **guidance** or coaching of a skilled practitioner or someone with the coaching knowledge to help in the evaluation of the performance. The practical level coincides with the second and third stages of Perrott's three stages of skills acquisition. She identifies the second stage as **practice** normally in the classroom, but occasionally in a controlled setting, a part of a training course in which there is a short practice of a specific skill, while the third stage is **feedback** which enables the teacher to improve the performance of the skill by **evaluating** the relative success of its performance. Perrott sees the three-stage process as a cycle with the evaluation within the third stage feeding back and influencing the first stage in an ongoing process of the development of the skill (Kyriacou 1991: 13).

(a) The concept of skill and its relation to teaching

Tomlinson (1995: 14) explains **skill** as a relatively consistent ability to achieve goals through economic action. Tomlinson (1995: 15) explains thus :

*Skill means having knowhow (Ryle), ability to achieve particular types of purpose through actions based on effective reading of relevant contexts. The involvement of purpose means the involvement of values (goals) and motivation in skill as well as insights into how goals maybe achieved.*

Therefore it follows from the discussion so far that a skilled person **knows what** to do, **when** to do it, and **how** to do it with **what** results (outcome). Skills learning basically requires learning - **by doing.** It involves the learner in **action plans** which indicate **what** to do and **when** based on **knowledge** awareness and recognition of **relevant** events as well as **action instructions**. Then follows active attempts to perform the action with **feedback** and awareness informing revision of strategy (Tomlinson 1995: 23).

Skills vary considerably in **content** of what is involved e.g. driving cars, reading as well as in general features like the **simplicity/complexity** of their constituent purposes and actions and importantly in their **openness** or **closeness** (Tomlinson 1995: 15). Closed skills involve relatively predictable and regular context demands while open skills are more complex and call for multi-purpose strategies which fulfil a number of functions at the same time or the same function in different ways (Tomlinson 1995: 15).

Teaching is not a **closed**, but an **open** and thus **complex** skill. Teaching isn't **telling**. If one teaches another person then one **enables** the other to do something which he or she could not do before (Trotter & Walsh 1990: 4).

Jacobson *et al* (1989: xii) state in this regard :

> *The **central role** of a teacher is to promote **growth** and **achievement** i.e. **learning** which is an internal process. This being the case, teachers don't teach students to learn; they **disseminate** information, **demonstrate** desired behaviours, **model** appropriate behaviours,and **facilitate** student achievement (own emphasis).*

Teaching can be viewed as a cycle (Jacobson *et al* 1989: 9, Tomlinson 1995: 17) Jacobson *et al* (1989: 9) present a simple but **comprehensive** and **practical model** of teaching with these three phases :

- The planning phase
- The implementing phase
- The evaluating phase

Jacobson *et al* (1989: 9) emphasise the **sequential** and **interrelated** nature of these three phases pointing out that in order to develop any **learning experience** (teach) a teacher first plans, then implements those plans and finally evaluates. It is important to point out that each phase demands a set of related teaching skills from the teacher. The **planning phase** requires planning skills, the **implementing phase** demands skills

in creating and implementing learning experiences, and the evaluating phase calls for evaluating skills.

The acquisition of teaching skills is a process of **learning-by-doing** (Tomlinson 1995: 17) within the cycle of **plan - teach - reflect**. This learning of the teaching skill takes place through distinguishable and interrelated, sequential phases. Tomlinson (1995: 19) points out that the study of teachers' own experience of the acquisition of teaching capability tends, while indicating its **'messiness'** to also reflect the sequence of overlapping phases generally found during skill acquisition. He then identifies the following phases in the acquisition of teaching skills :

- The **cognitive** phase which is the early phase where the focus is on getting clear **what** to do.
- The **associative** phase which involves the actual teaching attempts by novice teachers which involves taking on the further challenge not only of finding out **what counts** and **what works** but of getting it more **'together'**.
- The **autonomous** or **intuitive** phase results from further **reflective** experience of teaching attempts which results in students, finding things becoming **easier** and more **intuitive**.

The improvement within this higher phase of teaching skill development will take the form of more **efficient** and **ready execution** of all aspects of classroom sub-skills, including not only actions and interventions but also more **reading** and **awareness** of the classroom setting. There is a cycle of learning to teach at this higher level which Tomlinson (1995: 19) describes as a **benign** cycle in that it allows more time to **think** and **reflect** and thus pick up more and more **useful strategies**, so becoming still more **economical** and **efficient** in teaching and further learning. This is now within the realm of life-long learning. The central goal of life-long education in the development of an individual according to Dave (1975: 50) in Goad (1984: 5) is a wider competence than learning to learn and includes skills of learning and sharing enlightenment, skills in self-evaluation and co-operative assessment, and above all, readiness to change and improve on the basis of learning, sharing and evaluation.

(b) Some basic Teaching Skills

In discussing the basic or essential teaching skills, Tomlinson's (1995: 17) teaching cycle of planning, teaching attempt, and monitoring of outcome, as well as Jacobson *et al*'s (1989: 13) three phase approach of planning, implementing and evaluation will be used as a frame of reference or context for the discussion.

According to Kyriacou (1991: 8) the essential teaching skills involved in contributing to successful classroom practice are :

- **Planning** and **preparation** involving skills in selecting educational aims and learning outcomes intended and how best to achieve these.
- **Lesson Presentation**: the skills involved in successfully engaging pupils in learning experience particularly in relation to the quality of instruction.
- **Lesson Management**: the skills involved in managing and organising the learning activities taking place during the lesson to maintain pupils' attention, interest and involvement.
- **Classroom climate**: the skills involved in establishing and maintaining positive attitudes and motivation by pupils towards the lesson.
- **Discipline**: the skills involved in maintaining good order and dealing with any pupil misbehaviour which occurs.
- **Assessing pupils progress**: the skills involved in assessing pupils' progress covering both formative and summative assessment.
- **Reflection and Evaluation**: the skills involved in evaluating one's own current teaching practice in order to improve future practice.

Kyriacou's (1991: 8 - 9) classification of teaching skills is fairly comprehensive within the classroom domain. It is worth noting that what Kyriacou has done is identify the **composite** skill leaving the breakdown of the finer sub-skills involved. Kyriacou (1991: 9) points out that there is an **interplay** between the seven composite skills, with skills exercised in one area contributing sometimes simultaneously to the performance of other skills. Kyriacou (1991: 9) further states that all the skills involved in lesson presentation, lesson management, classroom climate and discipline are **interactive** skills; the teacher performs the skills as he interacts with the pupils.

In their work, *Methods for Teaching: A Skills Approach,* Jacobson *et al* (1989) identify and discuss the following skills of teaching :

- **Planning** which includes the following :
  - The goals and objectives of instruction
  - Lesson planning.
- **Implementing** which includes :
  - Questioning skills such as levels of questions (low and high), question techniques (redirection), (prompting, probing, wait-time) and motivating students.
  - Teaching strategies such as expository and discovery teaching, discussion strategies and inquiry teaching.
  - Mastery learning.
  - Classroom management.
- **Evaluation** which involves :
  - Measurement and evaluation.

Tomlinson (1995) discusses teaching skills within the context of **teaching competence profiling** for student assessment and development. Tomlinson (1995: 14) states :

> *"The Department of Education has indicated that in schoolbased arrangements for teacher training it wishes to see a clear focus on the teaching capacities that such training should be aiming to produce. It now insists (DFE 1992, 1993a) that use be made of relatively specific teaching competence statements in assessing, recording and developing student teachers' teaching capabilities".*

The purpose of this approach, Tomlinson (1995: 144) observes, is to promote increased **accountability** and **consistency** of assessment through precision of course aims (own emphasis). Tomlinson (1995: 145) sees the value to student teachers of this clear idea of the aspects of teaching competence as being that it gives the student teachers :

- an overall view of the nature of the professional role to which they aspire;
- a reference point for judging the relevance of offered resources and experience;
- a basis for active planning and organisation of their own learning as student teachers.

Arguing that there have been confusion and controversies in the areas of competence specifications, Tomlinson (1995: 145 - 150) suggests the following principles to be taken into account when formulating and using teaching competence profiles.

- In any teaching profile formulation, the pitfall of focusing on surface behaviours needs countering by embodying the idea of competence as capacity. Assessing competencies therefore requires evidence of consistent, intelligent achievement.

- C B T E fragmentation of teaching at a single atomistic level should be replaced in competence profiles portrayal of the multi-level, embedded nature of teaching functions and sub-functions.

- The open-complex nature of teaching skill means that there can be a variety of valid formulations of teaching competence.

- Teaching competence profiles should reflect the distinction between teaching functions and teaching strategies by including reference to both.

- Teaching competence profiling should reflect the open-complex nature of teaching skill through pluralism and concern for development of a repertoire of teaching strategies and tactics.

- Competence profiling should reflect the open-complex nature of teaching skill through pluralism regarding routes of student teacher progress.

Tomlinson (1995: 154) discusses the Leeds University Secondary School Partnership (LUSSP) teaching competence profile as an example. The profile identifies the categories of teaching skills.

In Zimbabwean teacher education programmes, the most detailed identification and description of teaching skills took place in 1983 when teacher educators were grappling with adjusting to the politically imposed new four year format of teacher education which saw students spend two full years on teaching practice in a course whose structure was as follows :

- First year in college
- Second year in school on teaching practice
- Third year in college
- Fourth year in school on teaching practice.

Teacher educators in Zimbabwe posed the following rhetorical questions :

- What teaching skills do students need to develop in order to start their teaching practice? These skills were identified as **baseline skills** (Bourdillon 1993: 15).

- What skills do students need to have developed at the end of their teaching practice? These skills were identified as skills to be achieved at certification (Bourdillon 1983: 15).

**TABLE 5.1**

## TEACHING SKILLS WITHIN TEACHER EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWE

**(Bourdillon 1983: 15 - 18)**

| Teaching Skill | Base-line skills to be achieved when taking over | Skills to be achieved at certification |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Basic skills | 1.1 Skill in using language (narration, giving instructions, explaining at the learner's level, questioning).<br>1.2 Skill in chalk-board work.<br>1.3 Skill in making charts.<br>1.4 Skill in displaying materials for pupil-learning.<br>1.5 Sensitivity to children and their reactions. | |
| 2. Preparation skills | 2.1 Skill in the selective use of a text.<br>2.2 Skill in the selective use of S.E.D.U. guides.<br>2.3 Skill in the selective use of other written material.<br>2.4 Skill in the selective use of local ideas, beliefs and experience (i.e. culture). | 2.5 Ability to consider a wider range of alternative sources, and to select the most appropriate for a particular group of learners. |

| Teaching Skill | Base-line skills to be achieved when taking over | Skills to be achieved at certification |
|---|---|---|
| 3. Subject mastery | 3.1 Thorough mastery of the topic and related ideas as treated in the syllabus, the textbook and SEDU guides, and a sure grasp of its relationship to syllabus aims.<br>3.2 Skill in relating the topic and the ideas to pupil's experience.<br>3.3 Skill in selecting and sequencing the key concepts related to the topic.<br>3.4 Skill in asking question which require pupils to explore ideas and relationships inherent in the topic and which require pupils to connect up the new learning with their existing knowledge.<br>3.5 Skill in the use of learning aids to highlight key concepts and relationships within the topic. | 3.6 Mastery of the topic beyond the 'school' level, and extending to applications in the modern world.<br>3.7 Ability to link the learning in complex ways to past and future learning, to other subjects and to real life.<br>3.8 Skill in identifying, anticipating and remedying any conceptual difficulties.<br>3.9 Skill in inviting questions and in providing answers which extend the pupil's understanding of the topic.<br>3.10 Skill in the appropriate use of a variety of learning aids and avariety of sources of information related to the topic. |
| 4. Planning skills: schemes of work | 4.1 Within the existing syllabus of the school, the ability to plan a scheme of work, giving a sequence of topics, for about three weeks at a time. | 4.2 Ability to formulate ones own Aims for a long-termteaching scheme.<br>4.3 Ability to plan a sequence of topics which relate to these aims.<br>4.4 Ability to plan for a range of teaching/learning methods, a range of learning resources and a range of pupil tasks and activities.<br>4.5 Ability to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching, and to adapt the programme in the light of this evaluation. |
| 5. Planning skills: lesson plans | 5.1 Skill in stating sensible objectives.<br>5.2 Skill in devising an appropriate introduction.<br>5.3 Skill in designing steps in the development of the lesson which allow for at least one variation of method (e.g. group work, individual tasks, use of audio-visual aids etc.) in addition the teacher's use of his own voice and the chalk-board.<br>5.4 Skill in planning a conclusion. | 5.5 Skill in stating behavioural and measurable objectives where these are appropriate.<br>5.6 Skill in designing steps which offer a wide variety of stimulation to pupils.<br>5.7 Skill in designing steps which show a clear awareness of the key concepts involved in the topic and of pupils' likely difficulties with these concepts.<br>5.8 Skill in designing appropriate activities and tasks for the different levels of ability within the class.<br>5.9 Skill in relating classroom learning to the local environment and to real life. |
| 6. Management skills | 6.1 Skill in organizing class teaching to focus the attention of the whole class on the teacher, the chalk-board, the text-book or on some set task.<br>6.2 Skill in organizing the children into groups for particular activities.<br>6.3 Skill in establishing a classroom climate which is conducive to learning.<br>6.4 Skill in the pre-arrangement, organization and distribution of learning aids and materials.<br>6.5 Skill in adjusting the pace of the lesson to the capacity of the learners. | 6.6 Skill in using the most appropriate form of grouping (e.g. ability groups, mixed ability groups, setting etc.).<br>6.7 Skill in stimulating and sustaining interest in learning.<br>6.8 Awareness of the component skills which help to establish a classroom climate conducive to learning (e.g. teacher's personality and appearance, teacher's style of communication such as his manner of inviting questions and opinions, of accepting answers and building on them, of offering choices, of delegating responsibilities). |

| Teaching Skill | Base-line skills to be achieved when taking over | Skills to be achieved at certification |
|---|---|---|
| 7. Questioning skills | 7.1 Skill in framing questions.<br>7.2 Skill in distributing questions around the class.<br>7.3 Skill in getting a balance between questions demanding simple recall and questions, demanding exploration and interpretation.<br>7.4 Skill in using some genuinely open-ended questions.<br>7.5 Skill in inviting questions from pupils. | 7.6 A refinement of questioning skills to include an awareness of types of higher order questions (e.g. questions demanding understanding, application, interpretation, evaluation and hypothesising).<br>7.7 Skill in generating probing sequences of questions in reacting to an initially unfavourable response from pupils.<br>7.8 Skill in arousing curiosity leading to pupil-initiated questions. |
| 8. Induction set | (This skill will be brought in under Planning Skills, see 3.2.2). | 8.1 Skill in capturing immediate interest by using a of approaches (e.g. dramatisation, demonstration, etc.); skill in focussing this interest on relevant key issues in the lesson. |
| 10. Closure skills | (This skill has been referred to under Planning skills, see 3.2.4) | 10.1 Skill in rounding off lesson, (e.g. by summarising, by setting appropriate tasks, by checking that objectives have been achieved, by linking key ideas to real life, to previous lessons and to the next lesson). |
| 11. Sensitivity to feed back | (The importance of exercising sensitivity to children should be emphasised from the start in all teaching activities). | 11.1 Skill in observing, noting children's behaviours and responses.<br>11.2 Skill in taking appropriate action in the light of these observations (e.g. following up a negative or unexpected reaction, exploiting wrong answers, flexibility in following a new direction in a lesson, capacity to adjust the level of demand either to a class or a group or an individual).<br>11.3 Skill in evaluating such features as pupil achievement, pupil responses, the achievement of objectives in particular lessons, the success of a teaching programme, the teacher's own performance.<br>11.4 Skill in making appropriate use of these evaluations in further planning. |
| 12. Explaining skills | (This skill is implicit in practically all teaching activities) | 12.1 Skill in making verbal explanations (e.g. choice of appropriate language, breaking down a concept or process into closely related smaller steps, explaining the complex in terms of the simple, use of comparisons and examples).<br>12.2 Skill in using non-verbal models to reinforce a verbal explanation (e.g. role-play, dramatisation, miming, conducting experiments, using charts, diagrams, pictures, graphs and concrete objects). |

Twelve broad teaching skills were identified by Bourdillon *et al* (1983). These are:

- Basic Skills
- Preparation skills
- Subject Mastery
- Planning skills
    - schemes of work
    - lesson plans
- Management skills
- Questioning skills
- Induction set
- Varying the stimulus
- Sensitivity to feedback
- Explaining skills

The last five skills are usually part of micro-teaching programmes. Duminy et al (1992: 108) for instance include them among teaching skills for a micro-teaching programme.

The discussion of teaching skills so far makes it possible to identify the **basic** or **essential** teaching skills that need to be included in a teaching practice curriculum. These can be classified as follows:

- **Planning and preparation skills** which include :
    - selection and stating of goals, aims and objectives
    - selecting instructional strategies
    - selecting or developing materials and activities
    - developing classroom procedures and routines
- **Lesson implementation or instruction or actual teaching skills** which include :

- introducing the lesson
- questioning
- establishing rapport with students
- conducting individual and group activities
- utilizing audio-visual equipment and aids

- **Assessment and evaluation skills** which include :

  - selecting assessment instruments
  - collecting and quantifying data
  - diagnosing student difficulties or abilities

The organisation and sequencing of the teaching skills and when they are taught and developed will depend on the course structure for each college. The important thing is that students need to be involved in a rigorous **identification** and **theoretical** study of basic or essential teaching skills and be engaged in their practice so that, through guidance, and mentoring they develop their proficiency in executing or using the skills in bringing about effective or productive learning in their pupils.

It is the researcher's contention that any teaching practice curriculum needs to have a section where the issue of **skills development** is discussed. Not only should students **know** what skills are involved in effective teaching and learning, but also **how** these essential teaching skills can be developed. This **insight** by the students into the process of skills development is critical if the students are to play an *active and perceptive* role in their acquisition of the teachers' role.

Reference to some of the approaches to teaching skills development were made in chapter three. There is the **apprenticeship** approach within the academic tradition of teacher education (see par. 3.3.1); then there is the **technological** approach within the social efficiency tradition of teacher education (see par. 3.3.2); the **artistic** approach within the development tradition of teacher education (see par. 3.3.3), an example of which is humanistic teacher education; the **clinical** approach to teaching skills development within clinical supervision in teacher education which has some bearing on competency-based teacher education and **reflective practice** within the context of reflective teacher education (see 3.3.4).

These five approaches to teaching skills acquisition and development offer the teacher educator an array of well researched and in some instance well developed and tested modes of teaching students how to teach as they develop their own styles of teaching. The approach the researcher recommends is an **eclectic** one where the five approaches are used depending on the **skill** being developed and the context in which it is developed. It is also possible to use two or more approaches simultaneously as one guides students in the development of a skill or skills cluster. Some approaches are found within other approaches for instance reflection within all the other approaches, and the clinical approach within the technical and reflective approaches. The examination of these various approaches to the development of student teaching skills offers possibilities and alternatives that can be adopted in the implementation of the teaching practice curriculum that is proposed.

*v)* *Micro-teaching*

Micro-teaching is a major feature of a teaching practice curriculum. This is because it is a technique that has been found to be a very effective way of developing teaching skills of student-teachers over the years since its first use at Stanford University in California, U S A. In South Africa, micro-teaching has been identified as the subdivision of teaching science or the science of teaching, which builds up, step by step into the practice part of teacher training (Walters 1990: viii). In Zimbabwe micro-teaching has been included in main documents of the teacher education programme. The Primary Teacher Education Syllabuses and Regulations document (1979: 28) stated:

*"Small group teaching, **micro-teaching experiences** and objective analyses of teaching situations appear to offer advantages in the **initial** education of teachers"* (own emphasis).

The survey the researcher carried out (see par. 4.3.4) shows that while micro-teaching is a component of teaching practice programmes in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges, there are problems in implementing it.

Micro-teaching is what the term implies, **miniature** teaching (Verster & Potgieter 1991: 52) derived from **"micro"** meaning small. In micro-teaching nearly everything is scaled down, the teaching cycle, the skills cluster, the class size and the teaching time. Verster and Potgieter (1991: 52) state that the student or anybody else making use of the micro-teaching technique literally teaches on a **smaller scale** and his or her teaching is **evaluated** so that deficiencies can be rectified in the following lesson. They go further to identify the following components of micro-teaching :

- a short lesson (5 to 10 minutes)
- a small group of pupils or peers (5 to 8 pupils)
- focus on one teaching skill or didactic principle in the instructional situation
- evaluation of (feedback on) the use of the skill practised
- Reteaching if necessary.

Duminy *et al* (1992: 99) also emphasize the scaling down of teaching in micro-teaching when they observe that in micro-teaching, the teaching situation is made small in three ways: a student teaching a *small* group of learners, for a *short* time using only a *few* of the many skills used in a full lesson. It is interesting to note that Duminy et al (1992: 98) scale the time down to *two* minutes for the practice of *one* skill and stretch it to *ten* minutes for the practise of a cluster of related skills which comprise a teaching phase. An introduction, they point out, comprises the skills of *getting attention, establishing cognitive willingness* and *establishing a frame* (Duminy *et al* 1992: 99).

Micro-teaching is an effective way of giving students **structured** and **controlled** practice in teaching skills. Walters (1991: 3) quotes the following specific objectives of micro-teaching identified by Cope :

- to stimulate students to conceptualise **basic classroom teaching skills**
- to introduce students to objective-based **lesson preparation**
- to accustom students to having their teaching **observed** for **professional criticism**

- to **constructively** criticise both themselves and their peers, based on observation of themselves and others
- to develop **language acquisition** which will improve their teaching ability
- to develop **self-confidence** both in their knowledge of the students they are teaching and themselves
- to encourage students to take on more responsibility in the **practical aspect** of learning how to teach.

A close scrutiny of these seven objectives of micro-teaching shows that the focus is on:

- conceptualisation, practice and development of teaching skills
- the development and application of observation of others and self in the acquisition and development of teaching skills and the acquiring of the teaching role
- the development of a positive and professional attitude as the students develop self- confidence and learn to be constructive in criticizing themselves and others.

**Advantages** of micro-teaching were given by Allen and Ryan (1969: 2 - 3) in their identification of its five essential propositions. Other writers in the area (Stones and Morris 1972: 80; Cohen and Manion 1977: 53) have quoted the advantages of micro-teaching given by Allen and Ryan or paraphrased them.

The five advantages of micro-teaching according to Allen and Ryan (1969: 2 - 3) are:

- First, it is real teaching.
- Second, micro-teaching lessens the complexities of normal class teaching. Class size, scope of content and time are all reduced.
- Third, micro-teaching focuses on training for the accomplishment of specific tasks which include instructional skills, teaching techniques, mastery of curricular materials and teaching methods.
- Fourth, micro-teaching allows for the increased control of practice.

- Fifth, micro-teaching greatly expands the normal knowledge of results or feedback dimension in teaching.

A discussion of teaching skills was done in paragraph (iv). Micro-teaching mainly focuses on the acquisition of these teaching skills. It however goes further, as it breaks down some of the teaching skills already identified for the sake of **analysis, practice** and **coaching** or **mentoring**. It also identifies certain cuing skills or intermediary skills between major teaching skills. An example of what has just been said is the following:

- Introducing a lesson is a skill which has already been identified as a teaching skill. In the context of micro-teaching, introduction is seen as a global skill with a number of subskills or cuing skills such as set induction, establishing frames of reference and awakening interest.

  One of the main tasks in the mounting of an effective micro-teaching programme is the identification of the teaching skills which are more focused and minute within **global skills** or **teaching cycle phases.**

  Walters (1990: 29 - 32), Verster and Potgieter (1991: 53 - 56) and Duminy (1990: 108 - 111) all refer to the **eighteen** skills identified by Andrew Trott of Stanford University in 1976 which they then describe. The following table from Duminy (1992: 108) summarizes these basic teaching skills (see table 5.2).

**TABLE 5.2**

# BASIC TEACHING SKILLS PRACTISED IN MICRO-TEACHING

***The introduction skills***
. Establishing set
. Recognising and getting attentive behaviour from pupils
. Establishing frames of reference
. Control of pupil participation

***The explicatory skills in direct instruction***
. Lecturing
. Clear communication
. Eye contact
. Giving non-verbal clues
. Variation of movement, voice, emphasis, etc.
. Illustrations, with mental images and representations (examples)
. Repetition
. Obtaining feedback

***The explicatory skills in heuristic instruction***
. Questioning and heuristic teaching
. Giving instructions
. Teaching pupils to observe
. Incorporating educational media

***The closing phase skills***
. Reinforcement
. Achieving closure

The following is a brief description of each teaching skill :

- **The Introduction Skills**

  - *Establishing set*: the skill of gaining and holding the attention of the class (Walters 1990: 29), getting learners ready for learning (Duminy *et al* 1992: 108), establishing cognitive rapport with learners to obtain immediate involvement in the lesson.

- *Recognising and getting attentive behaviour from pupils*: getting pupils settled and organised (Duminy 1992: 108), being able to recognise when the pupil's attention wanders and gaining it (Walters 1990: 29).

- *Establishing frames of reference*: the skill of relating the new knowledge to the pupil's relevant existing knowledge, which can be in an organisational frame or cognitive frame (Duminy 1992: 108 - 109); using something pupils already know to explain a new concept (Walters 1990: 30).

- *Control of pupil participation*: controlling boisterous pupils from dominating the class (Duminy 1992: 109), as well as drawing out and involving those pupils who are reticent and who avoid participation (Walters 1990: 30).

- **The explicatory skills in direct instruction**

  - *Lecturing*: This is really a composite skill combining a number of skills, e.g. exposition. Duminy *et al* (1992: 109) term it prepared *explanations*, while Verster and Potgieter (1991: 56) say it includes delivery techniques, use of audio visual materials, set induction, pacing, closure, redundancy repetition and others. It is one teaching skill that is overused in teaching situations and also used unproductively. Hence students' coaching in its effective use is essential.

  - *Clear Communication*: This skill involves using a clear speaking voice and language that pupils understand, at a comfortable pace, and in a logical, easily comprehensible way (Duminy 1992: 109).

  - *Eye Contact*: eyes communicate and can therefore be used to control (Duminy 1992: 109). It is also extremely important that a student teacher

learns to maintain eye-contact with each pupil so that the pupil feels he/she has been noticed (Walters 1990: 32).

- *Giving non-verbal clues*: This is a skill in the use of gestures expressions and even silence. Walters (1990: 30) gives the following examples: pointing focuses the pupils attention, an open hand says "stop", a crooked finger says "come here", a finger on the lips says "be quiet", a hand behind an ear says "I am listening", a frown shows disagreement or displeasure, a thoughtful look informs the pupil that the teacher is considering or does not understand his/her answer, and a smile says "I agree" or indicates pleasure.

- *Variation of presentation*: also referred to as *varying the stimulus* includes teacher movement, gesture, focusing pupils' attention, varying the style of presentation and pausing (Verster and Potgieter 1991: 56). Duminy *et al* (1992: 110) explains it thus: "This skill involves changing the tone and pace of speech, using gestures and physical movement, and varying the teaching method, amongst other things, by using technology or enabling pupils to talk or move".

- *Illustrations with mental images and representations (examples)*: used in inductive and deductive teaching the skill leads pupils from the concrete to the abstract. Simple media are used to explain difficult concepts (Walters 1990: 30). Learning is made easier through comparisons, examples analogies, illustrative stories and mental images (Duminy 1992: 110).

- *Repetition*: the skill involves knowing when to repeat and how to repeat in different ways to clarify a concept and indicates the value of the use of reinforcement in the classroom.

- *Obtaining feedback*: this is the skill of finding out how the learning is progressing, whether pupils have problems and what these are. Students are to be taught a wide range of feedback devices such as questioning, visual information, conversation and observation of the reactions of the pupils.

- **The Explicatory Skills in heuristic instruction**

  - *Questioning and heuristic teaching*: this involves working on; giving time for answers, praising correct answers but probing for more, redirecting questions to other pupils as well as showing or training pupils how to ask questions about their different subjects (heuristic or discovery learning/teaching) (Duminy 1992: 110). Walters (1991: 56) focuses on the use of probing questions in the training of this skill, by giving the following five suggestions on how a pupil can be encouraged to expand on his answer :

    - asking pupils for more information and/or more meaning
    - requiring a justification of a previous answer
    - refocusing attention on an issue
    - prompting or hinting
    - asking other pupils to comment on the first answer.

  - *Giving instructions*: This is the skill of getting pupils to do what the teacher asks them to do promptly and efficiently. It is closely related to the skill of class control and discipline. Walters (1990: 32) states that by mastering this skill the teacher finds it easier to give clear instructions which are understood by pupils

  - *Teaching pupils to observe*: The skill of observation plays a major part in subjects such as science, geography and biology. Student teachers need to be taught how to teach this skill. This, by implication means they have to acquire the skill themselves. According to Duminy (1992: 111)

heuristic teaching, which encourages questioning will also encourage observation.

- *Incorporating educational media*: Duminy (1992: 111) identifies two forms of media: those that help presentations, such as chalkboards and those that involve pupils in the learning process.

- **The closing phase skill**

  - *Reinforcement*: Verster and Potgieter (1991: 55) state that substantial psychological evidence indicates the value of the use of reinforcement in the classroom. Walters (1990: 31) observes that a pupil's improvement in learning is strengthened by reinforcement which can be done positively through praise or negatively by sarcasm and criticism. Duminy (1992: 111) points out that when a person is given a reward or praise for an action, he/she tends to repeat it again to get more reward. This is the origin of positive reinforcement. Duminy (1992: 111) and Walters (1990: 31) discourage negative reinforcement through criticism and sarcasm.

  - *Achieving closure*: Closure complements set induction and is attained when the major purposes, principles and constructs of a lesson are judged to have been learned (Verster and Potgieter 1991: 54). Walters (1990: 31) stresses that the skill applies not only to the end of a lesson, but that it is also used at the end of different phases in a lesson and involves the summarisation of key points before progressing further. Duminy *et al* (1992: 111) rationalise closure as a skill for the following three reasons:

    - at the end of some units of teaching, it is *cognitively* useful to sum up and effectively underline the main ideas or the practical applications.

    - a clear ending helps the learner to organise what has been learned; thus closure can be usefully done *by the learner* with the teacher.

    - closure is *psychologically* useful; the learners and the teacher feel a sense of achievement.

The micro-teaching skills which have been briefly described are **typical** micro-teaching skills. They have been presented as examples. Within this study, micro-teaching has been placed logically as a technique of introducing students to teaching skills, which have been discussed (see par. 5.3.3.1.4.2) and to give students initial practice in these skills.This helps them to understand these skills so that they can then develop them further in the extended or block teaching practice sessions in schools. Verster and Potgieter (1991: 56) state that in the course of time **almost** every institution for teacher training where micro-teaching is operational has identified its own teaching skills that need to be mastered by students. They point out, however, that consensus has been reached with regard to the following skills:

- Introductory procedures or establishing set
- Classroom management and discipline
- Questioning
- Explaining
- Teaching small groups
- Improvement of pupils participation
- Establishment of learning content
- Individualized instruction.

It is the teaching skills such as the ones just given which then get broken down into smaller components that result in the micro-teaching skills that were discussed.

Phases of implementing a micro-teaching session have been identified as the briefing stage, the teaching and recording stage and the feedback stage (Verster and Potgieter 1991: 57 - 58). The effectiveness of micro-teaching in assisting the student teacher to acquire and develop teaching skills depends to a large extent on the **coaching** and **feedback** he or she gets. For accurate and therefore scientific data collection that lends itself to meaningful analysis, a **coding** system has to be devised and implemented. Duminy *et al* (1992: 112) define **coding** as the name for different ways of drawing up an observation form and they point out that there is a possibility of having two different codes for the observation of the same skill. Duminy *et al* (1992: 112) sum up the importance of feedback or evaluation in micro-teaching thus: "If the

evaluation is to be effective, the students must know what they are looking for first of all. They should know what teaching skill is being practised in the micro-session and what the main elements of that skill are, so that they are able to identify and record them during their observation".

Duminy *et al* (1992: 112) identify the following three aims of drawing up codes, but they concede that there are various reasons for doing so :

- to record the nature of each element of the teaching skill.
- to record what they have seen at the end of each 30 second interval i.e. the distribution of the elements.
- to judge the quality of particular actions that have been observed.

It is worth pointing out also that apart from providing immediate feedback, coding forms make it possible for a student to evaluate him or herself if a video recorder is used. Three examples of coding forms follow. The first (fig. 5.1) is a simple coding form for evaluation of the skill of establishing set, the second (fig. 5.2) is a time line appraisal sheet for the skill of variation, and the third (fig. 5.3) is a coding form for the skill of questioning.

**FIGURE 5.1**

# A SIMPLE CODING FORM FOR EVALUATION OF THE SKILL OF ESTABLISHING SET

**(Verster & Potgieter 1991: 80)**

**SKILL: ESTABLISHING SET**

Student: ..... Class: ..... Date: .....

Elements of the skill "establishing set" or "introduction"

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| Topic announced ? | | |
| Element of surprise ? | | |
| Interesting ? | | |
| Provoke interest in new subject matter ? | | |
| Relate to new subject matter ? | | |
| Pupil activity relevant to new subject matter ? | | |
| Questions used ? | | |
| Questions asked with objective in mind ? | | |
| Teaching aids used ? | | |
| Did teaching aids serve a purpose ? | | |
| Problem posed ? | | |

**This is a simple code which shows whether the various elements of the skill were executed, hence the "yes" no response.**

**FIGURE 5.2**

# TIME LINE APPRAISAL SHEET FOR THE SKILL OF VARIATION

**(Walters 1990: 41)**

STUDENT _____ DATE _____

**Time appraisal for the skill of variation**

| Skill components | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Interval: 30 seconds | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| Teacher movement | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teacher gestures | | | | | | | | | | |
| Varying speech pattern | | | | | | | | | | |
| Verbal participation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Change in sensory focus | | | | | | | | | | |
| Physical activities of pupils | | | | | | | | | | |

INSTRUCTIONS

The five minute micro-lesson is divided into 10 intervals of 30 seconds each. The passing intervals will be indicated by the lecturer with a tap on the desk. On hearing the signal, ticks are to be made in those boxes indicating the type of variation(s) observed during the interval between signals.

**FIGURE 5.3**

# CODING FORM FOR THE SKILL OF QUESTIONING

**(Walters 1990: 48)**

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LEVELS OF QUESTIONS

**Coding form**

Place a tick in the appropriate space when the function takes place.

Transcript 1

| | Question number | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| Higher order | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Middle order | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lower order | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | Question number | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| Higher order | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Middle order | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lower order | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | Question number | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 |
| Higher order | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Middle order | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Lower order | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Total number of questions | |
|---|---|

| HOQ | |
|---|---|
| MOQ | |
| LOQ | |

| F | |
|---|---|
| Non F | |

**Symbols:** Use F to represent a follow-up question
Use ✓ to represent a question not judged to be a follow-up

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The discussion of micro-teaching as a teaching skill acquisition and development process sets the stage for its inclusion in the teaching practice curriculum that is proposed. The focus on micro-teaching within the curriculum will be on the following:

- The study of the theory of micro-teaching
  - what it is
  - the purpose of micro-teaching
  - its advantages
  - its role within the teaching skills acquisition and development
  - micro-teaching skills
  - coding and observation in micro-teaching
- The practice of micro-teaching
  - the micro-teaching programme
  - organisation for micro-teaching
    - the tasks of the lecturer(s)
    - the tasks of students.

*vii) Peer teaching*

Peer teaching means teaching one's classmates. It is a **simulation** technique in which students practise teaching skills by teaching each other. Peer group teaching can be a form of micro-teaching where the only difference from the typical micro-teaching is that instead of the student practising on real school pupils, he practises on his peers or class/college mates. Duminy *et al* (1992: 105) state that in many American universities, micro-teaching was done with a student teacher teaching five or six fellow students, who had been asked to play the roles of typical 'learners' in the classroom such as the inattentive pupil, the slow one and the keen one.

Watson and Osibodu (1987: 16) describe the general method of peer teaching as involving the division of a class of 30 - 40 students into groups of 6 or 7 students and having one student pretend to be the **teacher** and teach a lesson to the other members of the group who are her **pupils**. The students **assume** the roles of teacher and pupil and through acting out and experiencing these roles, some of the frustrations and excitement, and the occasional bewilderment and anger of being a teacher or being a pupil can be felt. They further see the *role playing* in peer teaching giving students valuable insight into some **emotions** experienced by teachers, as well as practice in the **skills** of **teaching.**

Watson and Osibodu (1987) seem not to emphasize the focusing on a single skill or skills cluster such as introduction or questioning but rather on a lesson. The researcher suggests an approach to peer teaching that is the same as micro-teaching discussed in some detail in paragraph 3.3.1.6. The approach would therefore differ from micro-teaching in the use of peers for pupils instead of **real** pupils. This approach has the advantage of harnessing all the positive aspects of micro-teaching and saving the college the trouble, time and expense in bringing in pupils from neighbouring schools or taking students for practice in neighbouring schools. The researcher further suggests that while it is logical and easier to organise starting a teaching skills programme with peer group teaching, it is also logical and desirable

to move from peer teaching to micro-teaching of pupils and then move on from there to fully-fledged school practice.

Peer teaching, just like micro-teaching has three phases to it; the preparation, the actual teaching session and the feedback session. Because fellow students are the **'pupils'**, preparation for peer teaching is done jointly by the three participants: the **'teacher'**, students playing the role of **'pupils'**, and the supervising lecturer. The task of the student who will teach is to plan the teaching episode and then discuss it with the other participants - fellow students and lecturer. The behaviour of the pupils' role played by fellow students also needs to be discussed in order to create a class atmosphere and situation conducive to the practice of the skill or skill cluster identified for the practice session. The coding system to be used by the lecturer and students who will observe the teaching needs to be identified, discussed and practised so that the necessary data can be collected for the feedback discussion.

Watson and Osibodu (1987: 18) state that feedback for the student who was teaching comes from three sources; the student teacher, the peer group he is teaching and the supervising lecturer. They point out that sincere self-assessment is an important attribute a student has to develop and that the most difficult aspect of it is being able to **frankly** confront one's weaknesses. They further emphasize the role of the supervising lecturer who should show by example, how to **assess** a lesson **objectively** and **sensitively**.

Ndlovu (1993: 50) summarized the following advantages of peer group teaching which make it a relevant component of a teaching practice curriculum:

- It is a more relaxed way of introducing a student to actual classroom teaching. Tension is there in the student doing the actual teaching, but it is quite different from a real class situation which can be fraught with painful and embarrassing situations.

- As long as the peer group is well selected, the students get to know each other and provide each other with support, encouragement and stimulation for learning.

- The feedback sessions, if well structured and handled competently, can become very effective vehicles for learning how to teach. Students learn how to analyse a lesson, how to record what is happening, focusing on salient features, and how to critically and objectively assess the lesson.

- Peer group teaching gives the lecturer greater insight into his students, their strengths and weaknesses long before they teach a real class. He can embark on remedial work through reflection sessions and reteach sessions which can help the student overcome his weaknesses before actually starting to teach learners.

- Lastly peer group teaching has the potential of being an effective but very inexpensive method of introducing students to teaching as well as a technique of developing the student's teaching skills. No expensive equipment is needed, it is economical in terms of time and amount of practice and supervision that can take place within a session.

The peer teaching section of the teaching practice curriculum will thus include the following sections:

- The theory of peer teaching

  - what it is
  - how it is organised
  - how it is implemented.

- The actual practice of peer teaching

  - the identification and discussion of teaching skills to be practised
  - coding and observation
  - the peer teaching programme.

*viii) School practice*

Before school practice can commence, practising schools have to be identified and students placed in these schools. Ndlovu (1993: 63) stated :

> *"Under ideal conditions, the choice of a practising school for student teachers would be determined by the opportunities for the best possible practice conditions the school could offer the student. The school would therefore have experienced qualified and effective teachers. It would also be well-equipped in educational resources and have an efficient administration. It would therefore be a school that is a model of good teaching and good school management".*

Such schools, if they do exist are few and far apart. It is also not usual to find such ideal conditions all round. It should be mentioned that the presence of student teachers and their college supervisors does in most cases have a positive influence on a school, even though it does disrupt the school routine.

Commenting on school practice Tomlinson (1993: 2) states :

> *"Perhaps most significant is the widespread view that as a* ***practical*** *activity teaching needs to be learned through engagement in the* ***practice*** *of teaching. There is evidence that this is the majority* ***opinion*** *of today's teachers, which they typically relate to their own university and college-based courses; 'you only really learned anything once you got into teaching practice'".*

In Zimbabwe the identification of practising schools has gone through three phases. Before 1980, colleges negotiated with schools and chose the practising schools where students would practise under the auspices of a qualified teacher. Soon after independence in 1980 student teachers were used to man classrooms in a bid to alleviate a teacher shortage brought about by the unprecedented expansion of the primary and secondary education system. During this phase, the selection of practising schools was done by the regional and district education offices - colleges had very little influence. Colleges however did stipulate that students be deployed in accessible schools and in clusters for easy supervision. These stipulations were

however not adhered to as the overriding motive of using students was to staff new schools mushrooming mostly in rural or communal lands. The second phase commenced in 1995 when the policy of using students to man classes on their own was stopped due to the successful accumulative increase in qualified teachers making it possible for the majority of schools countrywide to be staffed by qualified teachers. Now that the teacher shortage is over, colleges have reverted to the traditional mode of teaching practice where a student is attached to a qualified teacher for his/her teaching practice. This has made it possible for colleges to have control on the choice of practising schools.

When the practising schools have been identified and negotiations with the administrators - regional directors, staffing officers and headmasters positively concluded, the college then engages in a number of key organisational and preparatory activities which include placement of students in schools and their attachment to class teachers, and the students' preliminary visit as well as the thorough briefing of schools on the teaching practice exercise. The actual practise session in schools would then commence at a stipulated date and the major aspects of the school practice include:

- school and classroom observation.
- the actual practice of teaching during which teaching practice supervision and assessment take place.

Each of these major aspects of school practice will be discussed briefly in order to show their significance and place within the overall teaching practice curriculum.

(a) Developing a relationship with practising schools

School practice has to take place within a positive relationship between the college and practising schools. The concept of **partnership** has evolved as an ideal relationship that needs to be fostered if students are to benefit from the experience. Wilkins (1990: 5) appropriately defines **partnership** as the **theory - practice** relationship reformulated and goes further to point out that the altered terminology is

itself indicative of the changes that have taken place which have seen the shift in the theory - practice elements of the teacher education curriculum tilting more to the practical element represented by professional or methods courses and time spent in school. She even sees this shift reflected in the terminology used which has changed from the **theory - practice** relationship, which suggests an academic concern, a matter for analysis and theoretical debate to **partnership** whose connotation is **action** or active involvement. In Britain, legislation prescribed the form of this partnership.

In his discourse of partnership and reflective practice, Lucas (1990: 132) makes the assertion that the problem of **mapping** and **analysing** the demands of partnership is made significantly more difficult because of the contending models of the desired teacher: the **skills - focused** *'technician'* whose engine of professional development is seen as **external** to him or her and who is systematically *'updated'*, and the more **autonomous** individual who gives **primacy** to self-monitoring *'reflective practice'* (own emphasis). Lucas (1990: 134) asks a very critical rhetorical question, *"Who takes the critical role in the partnership, the lecturer or the teacher?"* His answer to this fundamental question which brings to the fore the latent tensions and contradictions that usually plague the partnership relationship is very apt. He states in this regard:

> *"Teachers and tutors may well believe that they are the **critical** persons in any partnership between school and training institution, but the **common sense** view must be that the **roles of both** are **significant** and that it is the **complementarity** of those roles that needs most **emphasis**, not the **differences** between them"* (own emphasis).

Lucas (1990: 134) then identifies the student teachers as the **critical** individuals in the partnership.

The establishment of a viable partnership between the college and school is critical in the overall aim of giving students that quality of practice that will result in their mastery of teaching skills and the teacher's role. Fish (1989: 166) sums it up appropriately when she contends that "although it is often given scant attention by

either college or school because of **pressure** of other priorities, the very way in which the **practice** is **prepared** for by both institutions is of major significance". She goes on to point out that the **omissions** often still include the **failure** of school and college together to establish a joint **understanding** of the place of the practice in the whole course; and the **failure** to elucidate the **intentions** and the **focus** of the activities of the teaching practice for the teacher, tutor (lecturer) and student. This, she concludes, has meant a resultant inattention to the respective **roles** of the teacher and tutor during practice. This last observation is going to be addressed when supervision and assessment are briefly discussed.

*(b) School and classroom observation*

It has become a traditional routine that before students engage in school practice they make a **preliminary** visit to their practising school. In this regard Cohen and Manion (1977) state :

> *"Student teachers are normally given the opportunity to visit their schools **before** the period of teaching practice **formally** begins. Where a system of school attachment operates, some may even make a number of half-day or one-day visits in the weeks leading up to the actual practice"* (own emphasis).

The following are the main purposes of the preliminary visit which have been identified by Cohen and Manion (1977: 28) :

- to meet the headmaster and staff
- to become acquainted with one's class or subject teacher
- to meet the children the student will be teaching
- to familiarize oneself with the nature and layout of the school
- to gather specific information relevant to the work the student will undertake during practice.

During or after the preliminary visit period, the student will engage in an observation session as a prelude to his gradual immersion into actual teaching. The students need to have studied and practised observation techniques, especially coding and other

forms of information gathering, recording and analysis for discussion purposes. Observation was discussed in some detail in paragraph 5.3.3.1 (ii). Observation of what goes on in the school in general and the classroom where the student will eventually and gradually assume the teacher's role needs to be carefully planned for by the lecturer, the students and classteacher(s). In this regard Fish (1989: 105) states:

> *"The preparation would include tutor and teacher* ***sharing*** *perceptions about observation; tutor and students preparing together in terms of what will be involved in the observation and the* ***specific contextual*** *details of it; and student and teacher establishing a* ***basis*** *for observation and* ***reflection*** *upon it"* (own emphasis).

It is worth emphasising that the *approach* adopted for the observation, as well as the *techniques* used, will be determined by the purpose of the observation and the observation techniques that are appropriate, as well as the students' **functional** knowledge of the observation techniques.

Figure 5.4 is an example of an observation guideline sheet adopted from Fish (1989: 107). It is a document on **pre-course** observation.

**FIGURE 5.4**

# PRE-COURSE OBSERVATION

**(Fish 1989: 107)**

*Pre-course Experience*

It is intended that this experience will provide:

**(a)** a clear insight into the range of skills, capacities, knowledge, and roles that are part of being a teacher.

**(b)** an opportunity to observe, meet, and talk to pupils of the widely differing ages and abilities to be found across the range of the school (primary or secondary).

**(c)** an opportunity to hear the views of the full range of adults associated with the school.

**(d)** some awareness of current practice in primary/secondary education.

**(e)** what can be involved in the activities of observation, interpretation, recording, and appraisal.

Some of the following procedures may help towards these intentions. You should discuss this sheet with a relevant senior member of staff before you begin.

**EXPECT TO SHARE WITH THE SCHOOL ANYTHING YOU WRITE DOWN**

---

1. Take as many opportunities as possible to involve yourself in the full life of the school, and seek to meet pupils in a wide variety of differing situations (in break-times, in out-of-class activities, in registration groups and assemblies as well as in classrooms, the gym/hall, and playing fields).

   From observations and talking to a range of pupils, note :

   - their interests, enthusiasms, and abilities, both in and out of class
   - how these change in different age-groups
   - how they respond in different groupings in class.

2. Try to see a wide range of classes (if secondary, in your own subject areas) with differing ages, abilities, and groupings.

   From observation and by analysis, note :

   - the organisation of subject material and resources and how this affects learning
   - the organisation of pupils and how this affects learning
   - provision for, and the differing abilities of, high and low attainers.

3. By arrangement, follow one pupil designated to you by the school across two school days. Do this by following the class or group that pupil is in (**NB:** DO NOT DRAW THE PUPIL'S ATTENTION TO WHAT YOU ARE DOING). From your observation of and discussions with this pupil among others, note:

| | |
|---|---|
| | - the varying demands made on him/her in different contexts in one day<br>- the differing skills and abilities s/he has to call upon in different contexts during one day. |
| 4. | If possible, arrange to follow a teacher (if secondary, of your subject) for one whole school day - including registration periods, administrative requirements, and work in any non-lesson periods.<br>From observations and talking to him/her note :<br>- the varying demands made on him/her in different contexts during one day<br>- the skills, capacities, abilities, strategies, knowledge s/he is required to demonstrate. |
| 5. | As a result of your general impressions from classroom and staffroom, play- ground and corridor, try to jot down what seem to you to be the key priorities of schooling in practice, and the key issues currently under discussion. |
| 6. | Collect all available published material from the school, including all documents given to staff and pupils and sent to parents. What conclusions do you come to and what impressions do you have of the school's aims and priorities? |
| 7. | Talk to as many staff as possible, including the head teacher and non-teaching members, about the school's aims and priorities. |
| 8. | If possible, attend a meeting involving parents. |

*ix) Teaching practice supervision*

Teaching practice supervision is a critical activity in teacher education in that it has the potential of assisting the student to develop teaching skills and acquire the full range of the teacher's roles. As Nettle (1988: 125) aptly put it, supervision in teacher education is a method of helping student teachers **to learn** about teaching. Boldt and Housego (1986: 212) state in this regard: "The all encompassing goal of supervising student teaching is to ensure that the student teacher becomes **proficient** in teaching" (own emphasis). Zeichner (1990: 105) rightly states that supervision is as central to student teaching practice as the actual practice the student is engaged in.

It has been pointed out before (Ndlovu 1993: 21) that at the moment in Zimbabwean teacher education, students are not adequately supervised. The students themselves have suggested that an improvement be made in the quality of supervision they

receive in the survey which was carried out (see par. 4.9). It is therefore imperative that the elements of teaching practice supervision in the proposed teaching practice curriculum address the present *deficiencies* in the approach to student supervision. It is also pertinent at this juncture to briefly discuss trends in the approach to supervision that need to be incorporated into the teaching practice curriculum as they show promise for the improvement of the **quality** and **effectiveness** of student teaching practice supervision. These trends are :

- Developments in clinical supervision.
- Reflective practice and supervision.
- Mentoring.

Put together these trends or developments in the approach to student teaching practice supervision have great potential of enhancing the *quality* of supervision.

(a) Developments in clinical supervision

In an earlier study (Ndlovu 1993: 242) the researcher proposed the adoption of the clinical approach to supervision. Given the trends in the development of teacher education in general and teaching practice supervision in particular, it is the belief of the researcher that clinical supervision as an approach and a process has the potential to accommodate the other two major developmental trends of reflective practice and mentoring. This is because, as Balch and Balch (1987: 19) rightly state: "The clinical supervision model has great **adaptability potential**" (own emphasis). It is the purpose of the following discussion to demonstrate this adaptability and developments in clinical supervision.

Smyth (1986: 1) in his introduction to a composite work, **'Learning about Teaching Through Clinical Supervision'**, which he edited stated; "After almost three decades of **experimentation, adaptation** and **growing acceptance** by school practitioners, there is no longer any serious doubt about clinical supervision being a **legitimate** way of **'knowing about'** teaching" (own emphasis).

The adoption of the word **clinical** to describe a supervision approach embedded in the daily classroom **practices** of teachers was felt to be an apt metaphorical representation of the essence of clinical supervision by the founders: Morris, Cogan and others in the 1950's (own emphasis). According to Smyth (1986: 1) they were vitally concerned about the relationship between **theory** and **practice** and of the way in which theory could emerge out of practice rather than **exclusively** being **applied** to practice as hitherto had so often been the case. The early pioneers wanted to emphasise the fact that hitherto real classrooms and the daily practices of teachers had been largely ignored as a source of **important learning** about teaching. Smyth (1986: 3) contends that when stripped of all its rhetoric, clinical supervision stands for a number of quite **explicit values** that have to do with **helping** teachers acquire **meaning** and **understanding** from their teaching. He goes further to state that what clinical supervision stands for, in essence, is a view of **teacher professionalism** that has as its crux **investing control** of **pedagogical matters** in the hands of teachers. While this is the essence and thrust of clinical supervision to the practising teacher, clinical supervision by virtue of its logical approach to the observation and analysis of what is going on in the classroom is an effective approach to student teacher supervision. Garman (1986: 33) rightly postulated :

*"At this point in time and from where I stand, clinical supervision appears to have a **more viable** place in **teacher education** pre-service programs than in activities for in-service".*

At the core of clinical supervision are stages in the clinical cycle whose basic minimum is four. These are: the pre-observation conference, observation, analysis and post-observation conference. Smyth (1986: 4) rightly points out that the crux of clinical supervision still is **conferencing** which refers to **non-judgmental** discussions between the teacher and colleague. One can not run away from mastering the **technique** of clinical supervision before moving on to incorporate new thinking and developments in teacher education and teacher introspection. In its evolution clinical supervision went through this phase when in the early 1970's it was thoroughly identified with the technique. As Garman (1986: 20) put it :

*"The **stages** provided a **linear guide** with clearly specified steps while the **cycle** conveyed the imperative for **ongoing involvement** and **continuity**" (own emphasis).*

Garman (1986: 240) convincingly showed how clinical supervision in the 1980's developed beyond the **technique** phase to an **established practice** with its theoretical and conceptual framework. In this regard Garman (1986: 26) stated :

*"Both scholars and practitioners have begun to contribute to a substantive **knowledge base** generated largely from their **collective** experiences. We are at the point where clinical supervision has become a **recognisable entity** capable of **interpretation** and **action**"* (own emphasis).

For the practitioner, the supervisor, Garman (1986: 33) points out that at the outset of his training, the technique provides a **false sense** of **knowledgeableness** and helps the novice supervisor to fend off anxiety stirred by new tasks. However this early stage in the development of the proficiency of the supervisor needs to gradually lead to an increase in **sophistication** as **persistent reflection** and **self-confrontation** helps the supervisor to understand the importance of technique and promote its place in the **broader** meaning of the **essence** of **practice.**

Sergiovanni (1986: 38) maintains that there is a **theory of practice** for clinical supervision and that developing this theory requires that one be concerned about establishing **truth** with respect to **effective practice** on the one hand and **'appropriateness'** of this truthful practice on the other. Sergiovanni (1986: 40) goes further to state that clinical supervision theory can be developed using a highly **theoretical** perspective or a **practical** one. While Sergiovanni (1986: 44-50) does discuss the theoretical perspective of developing clinical supervisory theory, what interests this researcher is the practical perspective where he points out that theories of practice of which supervision is one, are designed to **improve** things, to bring about **higher standards** to **strive** for a **better life**. The practical or **normative theory** of clinical supervision therefore is intended to help teachers and supervisors to **understand** better and **learn** more about their **science** and **art** and to **help** them become more **reflective** and **accomplished** in their **practice**. Sergiovanni ( 1986: 56)

argues that the theory of clinical supervision has to be judged, like any theory in support of professional practice, on the basis of its **usefulness** and **appropriateness** in **informing** practice. This is so because professionals **create knowledge in use** as they tailor practices to **unique situations**. Theory helps inform **professional intuition** and **judgement** and this enhances the **creation** of **knowledge in use**. What Sergiovanni was saying here is reminiscent of Schon's (1988) exposition of reflection as a theory of professional practice. This is a clear indication of the development of clinical supervision from the *technocratic* phase to the realm of *reflective* practice.

It is therefore not accidental that Smyth (1986: 59), in the same collective work, gives an exposition which he gives the title *Towards a Collaborative Reflective and Critical Mode of Clinical Supervision*, where he pushes clinical supervision out of the **technical** approach into the more *elaborate* and *deliberate* realm of **reflection**. Smyth describes the context of teacher reflection thus: "When teachers themselves adopt a reflective attitude towards their teaching, actually questioning their own practices, then they engage in a process of rendering **problematic** aspects of teaching generally taken for granted". Smyth (1986: 69) then describes reflection in teaching as follows: "Put simply, to act reflectively about teaching is to pursue actively the possibility that **existing practices** may **effectively** be **challenged** and, in the light of evidence about their efficiency **replaced** by **alternatives**. Reflection, critical awareness and enlightenment on their own are insufficient - they must be accompanied by **'action'**". This is the new thinking within clinical supervision which now puts it within the reflective movement in teacher education. Clinical supervision is no longer about mastering the technique but rather the technical stage is the beginning which should in time be accompanied by reflection which also grows in depth and sophistication through experience gained in the practice that is being clinically evaluated and reflected upon. Smyth (1986: 79) summarises it well when he says :

*"Adopting a **critical approach** towards the use of clinical supervision is to do more than endorse a **procedural orientation** of a step-wise process aimed at **describing** and **correcting** problems within teaching. That approach may have **utility** under certain **limited conditions** but there are larger issues. What is more important is a preparedness **to reflect** upon one's own practice, to **speculate** about the likely causes of relationships, but to also follow through into **action** whatever informed decisions to change that are deemed desirable"* (own emphasis).

The procedural orientation of the step-wise process of clinical supervision which is aimed at describing and correcting problems within teaching has utility in pre-service teacher education where the students grapple with mastering some basic teaching skills and developing their own teaching styles. Even at this early stage, the approach adopted by the supervisors should lay the foundation for a critical and reflective approach to self-analysis and evaluation of one's teaching.

It has already been indicated to that the basic approach to clinical supervision is logical, sequential and technical, which is the **form** of clinical supervision. The essence is, however, really in the theory, which is derived from practice and the ability to reflect critically on practice. It is therefore necessary for both students and their supervisors to study the theory of clinical supervision and its technique and to develop a mutual trust in their interaction within the teaching practice session if the students are to gain from their practice and supervision. Mastery of the **technique** only by the supervisors is not enough. They need to grasp and delve into the essence of clinical supervision, its **theory** and **philosophy** and its developments which have just been briefly described.

*(b) Reflective practice and supervision*

The concept of reflection and reflective teacher education, its origins from Dewey (1904, 1933) up to the present were discussed in fair detail in chapter three, 3.3.4. It was pointed out that reflective teacher education is currently the major focus of educational reform. This current trend in teacher education is clearly expressed in Tom's amazement that Zeichner and Tabachnick could in 1991 state; "There is not a single teacher educator who would say that he or she is not concerned about preparing

teachers who are **reflective**" (Valli 1992: viii), (own emphasis). This is the situation in America and maybe also in Britain and other European countries. Reflective teaching has filtered into Africa, and South Africa and Zimbabwe are cases in point. It is important for teacher educators to have what Tom (1992: ix) terms a view of reflective teaching that is *coherent*, yet *comprehensive*, and *sophisticated* yet *practical*. Tom (1992: ix) sees as one way of achieving this being striving to understand, conceptually, how various approaches to reflective teaching and teacher education compare to one another and how reflective teaching relates to broader intellectual developments within society.

When we come to focus specifically on reflection in the teaching practice situation, Fish's (1989: 76 - 85) identification of the five approaches to reflection become one appropriate line of departure. These are :

- ideas about reflection across a number of professional fields as presented by Bond, Keogh and Walker in 1985
- the teacher-as-researcher model as explored by Carr and Kemmis (1986)
- an approach via autobiography as described by Piner (1986), discussed by Eisner (1985) and Woods (1987)
- reflection-in-action, as explored by Schon (1987 b)
- teacher as self-appraiser as described by Pollard and Tann (1987). (Fish 1989: 76 - 77).

The reflection process as described by Bond, Keogh and Walker has three stages: preparation, the engagement in activity (the practice) and the processing of what has been experienced (the evaluation). (Fish 1989: 77) Their preparatory stage has four parts which clearly set the scene for the practice. These are, according to Fish (1989: 77):

- an outline by the supervisor of **aims** of the activity and the **broad structure** of what is to take place.

- the opportunity for students to **clarify** and even **modify** what has been suggested.

- the **pre-practising** of the **skills** required of them in a sheltered college setting. (This could be in the form of peer teaching or micro-teaching)

- an introduction to the resources available to assist them during the period of practical experience. (This is reminiscent of training and familiarising students with teaching media)

Fish (1989: 77) points out that throughout their involvement in these preparatory stages, **reflection** occurs as students **explore** what is required of them, the **demands** of the field and the **resources** available, including what they themselves bring. During the field practice students are encouraged to make various kinds of notes and records of their experience. It is these notes which students use during the debriefing phase together with their memories, in order to **reconstruct** an account of the salient features of the experience. In further support of this approach Fish (1989: 78) says that Bond, Keogh and Walker (1985) stress the following about learning through practice:

- No one can learn for anyone else, and only learners can reflect on their experiences.
- Reflection of this kind is pursued with intent, and is not idle meanderings.
- Reflective processes are complex and involve both feelings and cognition.

In the teacher as researcher approach to reflection which is an overt reconstructionist approach, Carr and Kemmis (1986), according to Fish (1986: 78), raise issues about the **values** brought by the student and supervisor. When it comes to the actual teaching practice, their approach has the following four stages:

- before teaching the student explains explicitly on paper her beliefs, priorities, the intentions in her teaching and her planning for teaching

- after the lesson the student explains the actual practice and then justifies it initially to a teacher or tutor and ultimately to herself

- the student then examines critically the beliefs and assumptions inherent in her actual practice and her explication of it

- the student then compares these beliefs, values, assumptions with:
    - her previously stated beliefs
    - the collegiate version of the traditions of the profession in this respect
    - the relevant knowledge generated by educational theory and any other related fields.

It is encouraged that as the student does all this, she be given the opportunity to exhume and face a number of important issues which are normally suppressed such as:

- the frustrations, limitations, constraints and coercions which bear upon action
- the routines, habits, customs, traditions, ideologies, dogmas, prejudices, certainties, precedents which are brought to the action and the decision about the action
- the influences upon the investigation of the action, and its associated interpretations, judgements and decisions.

Fish (1989: 78) views this as a model which enables the practitioner to delve deeply into his educational thinking and understanding as well as to take account of some external influences and constraints.

The autobiography approach to reflection is based on the premise that it is an eminently suitable method in the compilation of teacher knowledge as the autobiography is based on the subjective reality of the individual (Fish 1989: 79).

The other approaches to reflection within teaching practice identified by Fish (1989: 82 - 85) are **debriefing** and **deliberation**. According to Fish (1989: 82) debriefing means offering the learner the means of reflecting aloud on the experience and sharing those reflections with others who have been involved. Fish (1989: 82) stresses the need for having a debriefing session close in time to the action itself. Deliberation on the other hand is basically concerned with making curriculum decisions. The student teacher benefits by engaging in what Fish (1989: 85) terms a **three-cornered conversation** about lessons or a scheme of work with a tutor and teacher.

(c) Mentoring as an approach to teaching practice supervision

Tomlinson (1995: 7) gives a brief but operational definition of **mentoring** when he defines it as **assisting** student teachers to **learn** how to teach in **school-based settings** and a **mentor** as anyone involved directly with the student for the purpose. Haggarty (1995: 40) concluded from her research on the complexities of effective mentoring in initial teacher education that mentors have limited amount of time to fulfil their role and that routine organisational and administrative demands of that role take much of the time leaving the *crucial* aspect of **listening** to students and addressing their **learning needs** to take place only *occasionally*, if at all. Becoming a **mentor** involves making a *transition* from **classroom teacher** to teacher educator. Entwistle (1995: 48) and her research group defined a teacher mentor as:

- a person responsible for a student's **time and experience** in school who *facilitates*, *negotiates* and *manages* **access** in its widest sense
- a person with whom student teachers *consult* and with whom they *agree* a **specific focus** at any time
- someone who **monitors** against *agreed* **expectations**.

According to Tomlinson (1995: 20) the basic functions of mentoring are to actively assist student teachers with:

- acquisition of *awareness* and *strategies* relevant to teaching
- engagement in *teaching activity* which deploys such strategies and awareness
- *monitoring* of these teaching *activities and their effects*
- *adapting* strategy and awareness in the light of *reflection* on such feedback.

Tomlinson (1995: 20) says in all this, the mentor will need to act and communicate so as to *motivate* the student teachers and *harness their personal strengths* through appropriate interpersonal strategies and awareness. Tomlinson discusses mentoring within the reflective approach or perspective of teacher education and training which he prefers to refer to as **teacher preparation** and **teacher development**, reflecting the integration of **theory** and **practice,** whereas the traditional terms denote a **dualist**

division (Tomlinson 1995: 28). Mentoring is an approach to teaching practice supervision which is based on the premise that teaching is a **contested** activity, an **open complex skill** admitting to many *right* ways of accomplishing it as well as many tacitly embedded **layers** and subskills (Tomlinson 1995: 28 - 29).

Tomlinson (1995: 30) stresses the importance of an **awareness** that student teachers do not start from scratch when they engage in preparation for teaching. The following are what students bring to their teaching practice (Tomlinson 1995: 30):

- students bring consciously exposed **ideals** and **informal theories** about teaching. These need to be allowed **expression** and **examination** so that they can be built upon and developed/amended as appropriate
- students bring explicit **ideas** and **expectations** about how one learns to teach
- students also bring **existing capabilities** which include potential teaching skills and subskills.

Students therefore have **strengths** to apply and extend as well as **gaps** to fill and sometimes **preconceptions** and **dispositions** which need amending. Tomlinson (1995: 37) further points out that teacher-mentors also bring **ideas, assumptions** and **resources** into the teaching practice situation. He sums it up thus :

> *"If mentors are to help student teachers achieve **worthwhile professional learning**, therefore, they need to assist them to adopt the forms of **reflective stance** proposed by Schon and others. But because mentoring is itself a form of **professional capability** to which teachers bring all sorts of **existing ideas, assumptions** and **capabilities**, then teacher-mentors too need to adapt a **reflective approach** to their own activities and learning" (Tomlinson 1995: 37).*

Tomlinson (1995: 39) has identified **six** basic functions of mentoring all originating from the **teaching skill cycle** of **planning, teaching, monitoring** the teaching and its effects which results in **feedback** information which is **reflected** upon before leading to further planning, teaching and the rest of the teaching cycle. These are:

- Assisting **planning** by contributing to pedagogical understanding and the grasp of a repertoire of teaching strategies.
- Direct assistance and support for the **teaching** activity.
- Assistance with **monitoring** of teaching activity and its effects.
- Assisting **analysis** and **reflection** both during and after the action.
- Taking account of **skill acquisition phases**.
- Harnessing student **motivation** and **commitment** through interpersonal sensitivity and skill.

In his further elucidation of mentoring, Tomlinson (1995: 46 - 47) identifies **forms** of student teacher learning and then relates these to relevant mentoring aspects. The four basic forms of learning teaching are:

- students' learning from other's teaching;
- students' learning through their own teaching attempts;
- students' learning through progressive collaborative teaching with others;
- exploration of central ideas and broader issues.

To each of these four basic forms of learning to teach, Tomlinson (1995: 47) attaches the corresponding **mentor assistance** thus:

- **Assisting student teachers to learn from teaching by others by:**
  - unpacking the *planning*
  - guiding *observation* of the action
  - modelling and prompting *monitoring*
  - modelling and prompting ***reflection.***
- **Assisting student teachers to learn through their own teaching activities** by:
  - assisting *planning*
  - supporting the *teaching activity*
  - assisting *monitoring* and *feedback*
  - assisting *analysis* and *reflection.*

- **Progressive collaborative teaching** involving :

  - progressive *joint planning*
  - teaching as a *learning team*
  - *mutual monitoring*
  - *joint analysis* and *reflection.*

- **Exploring central ideas and broader issues** through :

  - *direct research* on pupil, colleague, school and system contexts
  - *reading* and *other inputs* on teaching and background issues
  - *organised discussion* and *tutorial work* on these topics.

According to Tomlinson (1995: 57) reflective coaching requires that the mentor develops **positive relations** with the student teachers. He points out that mentors have ro **relate to** and **help** student teachers as persons and **influence their actions** which means engaging with their **values, motives** and **feelings**. These interpersonal aspects are referred to as the **counselling** aspects of mentoring. Mentoring is therefore a form of **interpersonal skill** (Tomlinson 1995: 57). At the core of mentoring as an **interpersonal skill** is the **skill of helping**. Tomlinson (1995: 58) explains that **helping** is an **open** skill which is **purposeful**, though its goals are often difficult to discern. The helper targets his or her efforts towards the realisation of the **helped person's goals** through assisting their **actions** rather than **doing it for them**. For one to be proficient in this critical aspect of mentoring, there is a need to learn the more systematic ways of **counselling** and with experience and reflective practice one's interpersonal skills in mentoring can be sharpened and become effective.

In a study of mentor and student teacher relationships, Abell *et al* (1995: 179) found that:

- mentors believed that it was important to work with student teachers as it was their *responsibility* to their individual school system and to the profession to get the new teachers off to a good start

- the mentors did not see themselves as **evaluators** but as **helpers** to the student teachers

- the **respect** and **trust** developed during interactions between mentors and students teachers were *crucial* to **successful relationships**.

Their findings corroborate Tomlinson's assertions on **positive relations** and **helping** in the mentoring process. Within the interpersonal aspects of mentoring, there are **three functions** that pervade all dealings with student teachers whatever phase of the skill cycle the mentor is focusing on and whatever strategy they are employing. These are (according to Tomlinson 1995: 64):

- **Defining/doing**: how are we shaping the situation, what are we doing to influence the course of events ?
- **Active awareness**: how are we tracking and understanding whats going on ?
- **Motivating**: how are the other person's motives and feelings affected, so that he/she engages him/herself in the action with more or less commitment ?

The section of the teaching practice curriculum that is proposed and which deals with supervision of teaching practice will therefore focus mainly on the following aspects:

- The concept of supervision
- The historical developments of teaching practice supervision
- Roles of students in the supervision process
- Approaches to teaching practice supervision
  - The Scientific approach
  - The Humanistic approach
  - The Artistic approach
  - The Clinical approach
- Reflective based supervision
- Mentoring as a supervisory approach.

*(ix) Teaching practice assessment*

Teaching practice assessment is a major content area of the teaching practice curriculum. Compared to teaching practice supervision, it has been the more effective of the two processes in Zimbabwe since 1980. The reasons include the following:

- Due to the limited number of times student teachers are supervised and assessed (which is three times in a year by the college and twice by the school in a year long practice, and two times a term by the college and once by the school in a term [three months] long practice), it becomes more feasible to assess the students more effectively than to supervise them.

- College and school supervisors have assessment forms which guide and focus their assessment, thus making it possible for them to rate the student on the identified area and make supportive comments.

- It is easier to "judge" than to supervise simply because in assessment, one can arrive at a rating which is **impressionistic** and at times **intuitive** rather than **scientifically** based and **rational** and so get away with it while in supervision, one has to be more involved with **helping** the student to learn and practise teaching. Supervision needs **explicit** and **demonstrable** knowledge and skill as well as **time**.

Assessment is an inevitable aspect of the **teaching-learning** situation. When one is teaching and a student is learning, it is necessary to **assess** the student to determine **how much** he or she is learning, and what **problems** he is encountering in order to help the student overcome the learning problems. The type of assessment being described here is **formative assessment** which occurs during the process of learning. Assessment involves observation, measurement and value judgement. Gronlund (1981: 5) states that from an **instructional** standpoint, evaluation may be defined as a systematic process of determining the extent to which instructional objectives are

achieved. Evaluation as used by Gronlund here is synonymous to assessment. Slavin (1988: 541) identified the following five primary purposes of student assessment:

- incentives to increase student effort
- feedback to students
- feedback to teachers
- information to parents
- information for selection.

Natriello and Dornbush (1984) cited in Slavin (1988: 542) suggest six criteria that must be satisfied if assessment is to increase student effort:

- Assessment is effective to the degree that it is **important** to students.
- Assessment must be **closely related** to the students' actual performance.
- Assessment will be effective to the degree that students **perceive** it to be **equal** for **all students**. If students feel that some of their classmates are assessed more leniently than others, this will reduce the **effectiveness** of the evaluation system.
- Students often **interpret** assessment (and their efforts) in the light of the **social context** of the evaluation.
- There is evidence that the **more frequently** assessment takes place, the more students generally **achieve**. Reference here is to **formative** assessment.
- Success on assessment should be **challenging** for all students.

The effects of these six criteria of assessment are discernible in student assessment as well as in the students' reactions to the assessment. In the criticism of their assessment, students who were part of the survey sample (ref. chapter 4) raised such issues as:

- the *frequency* of supervision and assessment which was inadequate and needed to be increased
- awarding of grades which they said was *biased* and not a true reflection of the students performance

- lecturers' *negative attitudes* which included harassing of students as well as failure to justify the mark which would have been given on impulse.

Lecturers (see chapter 4) also identified problems on assessment which in a way emphasize the importance of the six criteria identified by Natriello and Dornbush (1984). Some problems they identified relate to the **inadequacy** of assessment due to shortage of **time**, the **approach** to assessment as well as the **attitudes** of students. The suggestions given by lecturers in the survey on the improvement of assessment in teachers colleges in Zimbabwe, do address the key issues raised in the six criteria of Natriello and Dornbush (1984) cited by Slavin (1988: 542). These suggestions include:

- the improvement of the assessment instrument
- improvement (change) of attitude of assessors
- more time for assessment
- improvement in the approach to assessment.

Two major approaches to assessment are **formative** and **summative**. According to Slavin (1988: 547) formative evaluation (assessment) asks *'How are we doing ?'* while summative assessment (evaluation) asks *'How did we do ?'* The frequency or the regularity with which formative assessment has to be carried out in order to be an effective teaching strategy has led to the coining of the term continuous assessment. Summative assessment on the other hand should be closely linked to formative assessment and course objectives.

Assessment may be **norm-referenced** when it focuses on comparisons of a student's score to those of other students or **criterion-referenced** when it focuses on the student's mastery of **specific skills** regardless of how other students performed on the same skills. (Slavin 1988: 547) When the teaching of a student is evaluated against given criteria it is criterion-referenced, however when this performance of the student is compared with that of others, the assessment also becomes norm-referenced.

Assessment of student teaching practice is often part of the feedback the student receives. Turney *et al* (1977: 50) stated that two important questions related to the practicum are *'how should student teachers receive feedback on their progress in practicum experience'?* and *'how should students' work be evaluated ?'* They then made the observation that however conscientiously the supervisor tries to provide helpful feedback, the question of **evaluation** and **assessment** of the student's teaching performance often creeps in to add a further constraint to effective feedback. Turney *et al* (1977: 52) mentioned that **multi-item evaluation codes** requiring a ranking of one to five was seen by some institutions to help the supervisor to be more **objective** in his assessment and to analyse components of the teaching process.

Assessment of teaching has tended to be **stressful**. Acheson and Gall (1992: 47) refer to the *'sting'* of evaluation. They go on to suggest ways of dealing with the *'sting'* of assessment. The first is to **emphasise** it on the premise that fear is an effective **motivator** for the teacher. The second is to **remove** it and only give **positive feedback**. The third is to use both fear and positive feedback in an intermittent reinforcement menu (Acheson & Gall 1992: 48 - 49).

Fish (1989: 183) maintains that the assessment of the student's practical competence has, almost exclusively, an **administrative** rather than an **educational** role in teacher training. She justifies her contention by pointing out that in the traditional model of teaching practice, the *first* assessment is usually **diagnostic** and intended to alert students and staff to those who are unsuitable for the profession, while the *final* practice is a means of gaining entry to the profession.

Fish (1989: 184) compares the traditional criteria for assessment with those of the reflective practitioner model. She points out that within the traditional model, schedules of criteria for assessment abound but a detailed examination of these criteria reveals a number of weaknesses which include the following:

- they usually concentrate on performance of observable teaching skills and refer less frequently to pupils' learning

- they are rarely geared to take account of the unpredictable happenings in the classroom
- they often ignore the complexity of the teacher's task and rarely focus upon the holistic view
- they omit the full range of perspectives on the students' work.

Fish observes that the criteria for assessment adopted within the traditional approach to teaching practice take a *rational* managerial or *scientific* view to teaching mainly because these aspects are easier to identify both *theoretically* as characteristics of teaching and in *practice* in classroom observation. It is worth pointing out here that while Fish (1989: 184) criticises the traditional approach to assessment, it is what can be termed the baseline to *effective* assessment. The basic scientific and technical approach is essential and only from it can one then develop to the more sophisticated and greatly demanding approach suggested within the reflective practitioner model. The reflective approach to assessment has the following positive attributes:

- it offers a means of monitoring the student teacher's ongoing *processes* of learning
- it requires the trainee to take part in the assessment procedure itself
- it copes with aspects such as the continuous adaptation and refinement of practice, and the ability to reflect upon it, deliberate about it, and investigate it.

Fish (1989: 184) sees the implication of these attributes of assessment within the reflective model as being:

- first, that student teacher, college assessor as well as co-operative teacher need to be clear and in agreement about what the student is to be assessed on, about the evidence used as basis of assessment and about the problematic nature of assessment.

- second, that as the goal is to produce a reflective practitioner, the student must be more involved in assessment and the focus of assessment must expand. In this regard Fish (1989 : 185) states: "This means a move towards a more radical

approach which uses **profiling**, where the student's self-appraisal is taken seriously, and where assessment becomes a continuing process of reporting on all aspects of the practice: **cognitive** and **affective**; success and failures; strengths and weaknesses; processes as well as products; **deliberative** and **reflective** abilities as well as **teaching performance**.

- third, with the focus of assessment on the student's potential to continuously investigate, deliberate upon and refine his or her practice, supervisors and students together need to bring their multiple perspectives to considering the **quality** of the investigations, reflections and deliberations upon current practice. Fish (1989: 185) points out that all this can be sampled by reading **written reflections** engaging the student in **deliberation** and **observing** subsequent practice and the deliberations related to it.

This is an approach to assessment in reflective teacher education in general and reflective teaching practice in particular. Another approach to be briefly discussed is assessment according to the clinical approach to teaching practice as explained by Acheson and Gall (1992: 60). They state that clinical supervision is the heart of a good teacher evaluation system. They go on to point out that the planning observation and feedback cycle should occur several times so that the teacher has an opportunity to grow, improve as well as to be evaluated. It is also Acheson and Gall's (1992: 50) contention that the teacher needs to be aware of the **criteria** that will be used to **evaluate performance** and that these include *specific* criteria for a given teacher in a particular situation and also *general* criteria applied to all teachers of the area.

The approach to teaching practice assessment within a mentorship mode of teaching practice and supervision is extensively discussed by Tomlinson (1995). He discusses teaching practice assessment within the context of that of the British Department for Education which has legislated for a **school-based** arrangement for teacher training (Tomlinson 1995: 144) within a partnership relationship between teachers' colleges and schools. Tomlinson (1995: 144) states that the Department for Education (DFE) insists that use be made of relatively specific **teaching competence statements** in

**assessing, recording** and **developing** student teacher's teaching capabilities. In Britain therefore, while there is a move towards reflective teacher education, the government requires that teachers in training be trained to acquire **specified** competencies and that the assessment of students be competence based.

Concerning the approach to student teacher assessment, Tomlinson (1995: 162) focuses on the effective use of profiles or assessment forms. He suggests that teaching competence profiles should include mention of a repertoire of particular **teaching strategies** and their constituent **pupil activities, organisations** and **functions**. Tomlinson (1995: 162) maintains that since teaching is a **purposeful** interactive activity, it can only be **assessed** by reference to its aims and also the student teacher's lesson plan. When it comes to **lesson observation** and **assessment** Tomlinson (1995: 164) rightly makes the point that they need to start with a consideration of **aims**, **planning** and **preparation** of the lesson.

Tomlinson (1995: 16) makes this very perceptive comment about the assessment process by mentors :

> *"The temptation in **observing** and **assessing** lessons is perhaps to react **passively**, noting anything **unusual** in particular, anything negative. This may not be totally disastrous, in that an experienced teacher's **tacit knowledge** will tend to alert them to **relevant features**. But at best it isn't likely to help them very much in **articulating their views** and in **explaining their rationales** to student interns, let alone celebrating the **positive achievement** and displaying the **warmth** student-teachers tend to prefer in their mentors"* (own emphasis).

Tomlinson (1995: 166 - 168) contends that both for formative and summative purposes, judgments about student teachers' teaching competence need to be **valid** and **reliable**. Competence profiling gives the student a reference point to use for his own reflection on his learning to teach. Tomlinson (1995: 169) also emphasises the pedagogical value of linking aspects of **formal, summative** and **informal formative** assessment which he sees as making the assessment experience **less arbitrary** and **more authentic**. Again the potential of the gains on the student's part through the

development of self-monitoring and reflective skills needs to be emphasised. In this regard the students can write **reflective** notes on their teaching, lesson reviews, personal logs and diaries. Tomlinson (1995: 170) suggests the involvement of students in the compilation of their formal assessment record as major advantages of this approach including its gaining of the students' **commitment** to learning to teach in general and in particular becoming skilfully **reflective** and **articulate** in reviewing their own teaching. He reasons as follows: "so that they can at worst, *defend their corner* in the final negotiation". Students can also be involved in the formal process of assessment while at the same time promoting their reflection by having them compile an **assessment folder** or **portfolio** which will include all assessable products of the course including essays, reviews, teaching materials and lesson review materials by mentors, other teachers and tutors or by the students themselves (Tomlinson 1995: 170). In Zimbabwe, this is done by having the student compile and maintain a teaching practice file.

Finally, Tomlinson (1995: 170 - 171) underscores the importance of **sequence** and **timing** in the assessment process. Both formative and summative assessments need to be planned so that they are regular and appropriately timed to coincide with relevant stages at which specific developments in the student's learning and development of teaching skills can be discerned. As Tomlinson (1995: 171) aptly puts it: "it appears sensible to have a **series** of **points** at which **formal interim** and eventually a **final formal** assessment are made of student progress using the relevant teaching profile".

Entwistle (1995) studied the influence of assessment criteria in primary school mentoring. A profiling system that identified the following five broad key areas in the profile of personal and professional development was developed:

- Understanding and assessing children's learning.
- Management for learning.
- Planning.
- Teaching skills.
- Personal and professional development;

On the basis of these key areas, she developed **criteria** for assessment. Since the profile was developmental, the associated criteria were also developmental, showing progression in school-based competence. The criteria were developed to assist **mentors** to determine the level of achievement of students in their schools (Entwistle 1995: 50).

Entwistle (1995: 53) found that all mentors in her study acknowledged the usefulness of the criteria for assessment purposes. She found at least four main benefits that accrued from the existence and the use of criteria that have *significance* for mentor training programmes:

- The criteria helped mentors to comfortably handle both their **supporting** and **assessment** roles thus reducing the potential for role conflict.
- By being *specific* by building up a *realistic* and *reasonable* set of **assessment criteria** and then suggesting that mentors use them in a **formative** as well as diagnostic way, mentors are *empowered* to do the job well across *all* its aspects.
- The criteria encouraged the mentor, student teacher and tutor to share the same language and develop a **professional discourse** in an exciting way.
- The **criteria** also helped to close the gap between **theory** and **practice** between what is *learned* in college and what is *learned* in school.

Entwistle's study underscores the value of **profiling** and the use of *specific* **criteria** for effective assessment of students' teaching practice. Her research also shows the importance and value of training mentors in assessment as well as use of the assessment profiles and criteria.

In teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe, teaching practice assessment has a number of the features described by Tomlinson. This is because it is basically competency based. Two **handbooks** on student teaching have so far been written in Zimbabwe to **assist** the students in conceptualising what is involved in their teaching practice. The first, a *"Handbook on Student-Teaching in Secondary Schools"* edited by Bourdillon was first published in 1983. The second, *"Teaching Practice Guide For Student*

*Teachers"* edited by Gwati and Chasokela was published in 1995. The 1983 Handbook is more detailed and covers specific subject requirements in secondary schools, while the 1995 handbook is less detailed, tending to summarize the detail as guidelines are given. However both documents taken together do give an indication of the approach and focus of assessment in Zimbabwean teachers' colleges, in particular because the co-writers of the guideline handbooks for 1995 represented **all** colleges whereas the co-authors of the 1983 handbook were teaching practice co-ordinators in three secondary teachers' colleges and a member of the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Zimbabwe then known as the Associate College Centre.

In teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe, there has been an effort to articulate objectives of teaching practice and the 1983 Handbook on student-teaching in secondary schools (Bourdillon 1983: 4 - 5) is a typical example of these objectives. Table 5.3 provides these objectives. They are classified into three categories: global, objectives arising from day to day experiences and objectives related to supervision.

**TABLE 5.3**

# OBJECTIVES OF THE TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**(Bourdillon 1983: 4 - 5)**

a) 'Global' objectives: Students have the opportunity :

- to serve the nation at a time when there is great emphasis on giving all children an opportunity to learn at secondary level and also a great shortage of qualified teachers

- to develop their teaching skills to the level at which they can ultimately be certificated and can join the service as full members of the teaching profession.

b) Objectives arising from day-to-day experience: Students have the opportunity to :

- test their reactions to the teaching role, the routines and responsibilities involved, the problems to be overcome, the opportunities for relationship, achievement and service which it offers

- to experience what it means to work as part of a school community, which itself is in relationship with a wider community

- to develop a wide range of organisational skills

- to apply theoretical ideas to the practical situation

- to develop sensitivity towards people and situations and the capacity to adapt to these people and situations

- to develop new professional and personal relationships.

c) Objectives related to supervision : Students have the opportunity :

- to seek advice and to learn from the advice they are offered

- to build up their confidence in their many new roles, as a result of having ready assistance and support at hand

- to try out a range of teaching methods, approaches and activities.

These objectives of the teaching practice experience become the context of both the supervision and assessment of the students' teaching. The other operational context for the students' teaching practice includes the documents that he or she has to compile and maintain. These include :

- The teaching practice file containing lesson plans and lesson notes and evaluation reports on the teaching, as well as supervisors' comments and assessments
- Syllabuses
- Schemes of work
- Mark lists and pupil records.

In the 1995 Handbook (Gwati and Chasokela 1995: 2) the importance of documentation is emphasised thus :

*"Documentation is a very* ***important*** *aspect of your teaching, without which there is no* ***concrete evidence*** *of the work covered by you and your learners. Supervisors partly base their* ***assessment*** *of you on your* ***records***"
(own emphasis).

With the operational context of the objectives of teaching practice as well as the documentation to **guide** the student's teaching activities and **show** what he\she is doing, the stage is set for the supervisor to supervise and assess the student's teaching. In this regard the 1983 Handbook (Bourdillon 1983: 15 - 18) came up with a detailed teaching competence profile document, termed the Guidelines Table for the Supervision of Teaching Skills (see table 5.2). Teaching practice supervision and assessment in Zimbabwe can therefore be described as competence based. The guidelines table identifies the **twelve** teaching skills which students are expected to develop with the assistance of supervisors. Then there is a division of each of the twelve skills into two broad sections: **baseline skills** to be achieved when taking over and **skills to be achieved at certification**.

The baseline skills are developed while the student is at college through methodology courses, professional studies, micro-teaching and peer teaching. The school practice is to make it possible for the student, through the supervision or mentorship of the

college lecturers and co-operating teacher, to develop the baseline skills to the level judged to be acceptable for the student to be certificated. The development from the baseline skills to the skills required for certification is achieved by means of **selfdevelopment** through **practice** and **reflection**, the supervision of lecturers and co-operating teachers, and the **formative assessment** that should be an integral part of this process. To determine whether the student has achieved the level necessary for certification, a process of summative assessment takes place involving first **internal** college assessment and then **external** assessment or final teaching practice examinations.

The twelve basic general skills which are the focus of student practice supervision and assessment compare very well with those identified by Tomlinson (1995: 152) for the United Kingdom teacher education system. They also are classified in a similar manner with, first, the identification of the skill, then its sub-division into subskills within that basic skill. For example basic skills are **five** in number, the preparation skill has **four** sub-skills while subject mastery has **five** subskills. The guidelines table for the supervision of teaching skills becomes not only the basis for the **student's practice** and his/her **supervision** but also of his/her **assessment**. Implied in the way the teaching skills have been specified from the **general** to the **specific; baseline** to **higher order** skills; is the assumed **developmental approach** to student teaching skills acquisition. There has to be **evidence** of **growth** in the student's teaching ability and it is **formative assessment** within the supervision process that is supposed to detect this. Formative assessment will make it possible to **diagnose** the student's problems in order to render the necessary **assistance** and **support**.

Originating from the guidelines table for the supervision of teaching skills is the **Supervision form for classroom lessons** (see Table 5.4) which has the following broad sections to it:

- Preparation and Planning
- Teaching Procedures
- Class Management and Control
- Marking and Record Keeping

## TABLE 5.4

# SUPERVISION FORM FOR CLASSROOM LESSONS

**(Bourdillon 1983: 19)**

Parent College _____ Student's Name _____
Host College _____ School _____
Subject _____ Topic _____ Class _____
Date _____

| ASSESSMENT OF TEACHING SKILLS | unsatis. | weak | satisf. | good | v.good | COMMENTS ON LESSON |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PREPARATION & PLANNING | | | | | | |
| Objectives clear and sensible | | | | | | |
| Introduction | | | | | | |
| Selection and sequencing of Content | | | | | | |
| Knowledge of content | | | | | | |
| Appropriateness of Activity | | | | | | |
| Closing the lesson | | | | | | |
| TEACHING PROCEDURES | | | | | | |
| Generating class interest | | | | | | |
| Aids/apparatus/blackboard | | | | | | |
| Teacher's use of language | | | | | | |
| Teacher/pupil interaction | | | | | | |
| Pupil/pupil interaction | | | | | | |
| Questioning | | | | | | |
| Pacing of lesson | | | | | | |
| CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT & CONTROL | | | | | | |
| Focussing pupils' attention | | | | | | |
| Organising pupils | | | | | | |
| Closing the lesson and Follow-up | | | | | | |
| LESSON OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED | | | | | | |
| MARKING CONSTRUCTIVE AND UP TO DATE | | | | | | |

Overall comment and advice : _____

At this stage of your training this lesson was: unsatisfactory/weak/satisfactory/good/v.good.
Name of Supervisor _____ Signature _____(please print)
EDUCATION OFFICER/HEADMASTER/TEACHER/LECTURER (delete inapplicable)

It is this form which is used not only for supervision of the student's teaching during his period of practice but also for the student's **formative assessment**.

There is also a form which (as suggested by Bourdillon, 1983: 21) is to be used for the **summative assessment** of the student towards the end of the teaching practice period. This form is depicted in Table 5.5, as the Student-Teacher Overall Assessment Form.

**TABLE 5.5**

## STUDENT-TEACHER OVERALL ASSESSMENT FORM

**(Bourdillon 1983: 21)**

Parent College _____ Student's name _____
Host College _____ School _____
Subject/s _____ Topic _____ Class _____
Date _____

---

Teaching ability _____
_____
_____ A. B. C. D. R. F.
Schemes of work and record of work _____
_____ A. B. C. D. R. F.
Lesson preparation and planning _____
_____ A. B. C. D. R. F.
Assessment (Testing and marking ability) _____
_____ A. B. C. D. R. F.
General comments on e.g. Rapport with pupils, headmaster, other teachers and the community: resourcefulness, initiative: co-curricular activities etc. _____
_____
_____
At this stage of training do you consider the student unsatisfactory (F or R), Weak

(D), Satisfactory (C), Good (B) or Very Good (A)

Name of Supervisor _____ Signature _____

EDUCATION OFFICER/HEADMASTER/HEAD OF DEPARTMENT/TEACHER/ LECTURER (delete inapplicable)

_____

It is however generally not used, with colleges making use of their modified supervision form for both formative and summative assessment.The external assessors mostly rely on the narrative approach to the recording of their final assessment findings when they examine the teaching of the student.

Competence levels in teaching performance as well as supervision and assessment using specified guidelines logically imply the presence of commonly agreed **criteria** of **rating** or judging the **level** and **quality** of the students teaching performance. Bourdillon (1983: 23) worked out a fairly comprehensive **criteria** guideline document that related the **rating** (mark or grade) to its **conceptual description**, how it is **interpreted** on the guideline table for the supervision of the student's teaching, as well as the **behavioural evidence** of the student. This was a very concerted effort to make the criteria document as comprehensive as possible, so as to make it possible to achieve consensus validity, reliability and objectivity in the assessment of students' teaching. The document is termed the **Criteria Table for the Assessment of Student Teaching** (see Table 5.6).

**TABLE 5.6**

# CRITERIA TABLE FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT TEACHING

**(Bourdillon 1983: 23)**

Non Passing Grades

| Category | Description | Interpretation of the Guideline Table | Behavioural Evidence |
|---|---|---|---|
| Outright Failure (F) | Candidate is unsuited to a career in teaching. | Totally inadequate command of basic teaching skills. | Lack of teaching skills and lack of organisational control over children and activities is such that little or no learning is taking place. |
| Referral (R or E) | Unsatisfactory, but indications of potential for improvement with further learning opportunities. | Some skills adequately mastered, others requiring further practice and development. | Children's learning is too sporadic to be acceptable. Some display of teaching skill and organising ability allows for sporadic learning. |
| Passing Grades The Weak Teacher (D) | The weak teacher is more than a class-minder, his control must be sufficient to enable learning. | Weak, but adequate mastery of base-line skills. Little growth toward management skills. | Environment, materials and children sufficiently organised by and influenced by the teacher for most children to learn from most procedures and activities. |

| Category | Description | Interpretation of the Guideline Table | Behavioural Evidence |
|---|---|---|---|
| The Average or Satisfactory Teacher (A) | The average or satisfactory teacher knows what he wants to teach and teaches it effectively. | Sound mastery of all base-line skills. Indications of some growth towards complex management skills. | Teacher is in full control of the class and its activities. The work is purposeful Children know what is required of them. Children learn mainly because the teacher teaches. |
| The Good Teacher (B) | The good teacher is a capable manager of the learning programme, the learning environment and of children. | Displays many of the complex management abilities indicated in the right-hand column. | The classroom, learning resources and children are effectively managed to produce learning experiences. In addition to what the teacher teaches children learn in a variety of ways thro' a variety of activities. |
| The Exceptional Teacher (A) | The exceptional teacher has a distinctive awareness of learning needs and displays unusually appropriate treatments. | | Distinctive sensitivity to children and their learning. Marked adaptability in response to learning needs. Unusual approaches to problems and the presentation of topics. |

In a survey this researcher carried out, whose findings are discussed in chapter four, the views of lecturers and students on the current approach to teaching practice assessment in Zimbabwe were sought and they are discussed in paragraph 4.6. Students in the sample (85%) rated their assessment by college lecturers as **effective**. They were also satisfied with their assessment by school based supervisors with 70%

of the students in the sample rating school assessment as **effective**. The students did however have some **criticisms** of their assessment which included:

- the negative attitude of some lecturers reflected in harshness and threatening or intimidating approaches
- the sexual abuse and harassment of female students by some lecturers
- assessment that was not uniform but biased
- the ambushing of students for assessment purposes instead of notifying them.

Students had suggestions which they offered for the improvement of the assessment process and it is clear that they focused on the eradication of the criticisms or weaknesses and deficiencies they identified in their assessment. These suggestions included:

- students having equal number of visits each term, thus highlighting the need for consistency and fairness in the frequency of the assessment of students
- the assessment itself had to be uniform in approach, with students in both urban and rural settings visited an equal number of times and given the same attention
- objectivity in assessment and avoidance of awarding marks to students which they did not deserve because of personal relationships. This in a way called for the removal of the element of bias in assessment.

It is therefore important that in the construction of the teaching practice curriculum, the students' criticisms and concerns on assessment be addressed and that their suggestions for the improvement of the assessment process be incorporated.

Lecturers in the sample were asked to identify **problems** which they encountered when assessing students on teaching practice and their analysis revealed that the common problems included the following:

- shortage of time
- lack of transport to take lecturers to practising schools
- problems on the approach to assessment
- deficiencies in the assessment instrument or problem in using the instrument
- students' negative attitudes.

The lecturers were also asked to provide suggestions for the improvement of the assessment of students and common suggestions were:

- the improvement of the assessment instrument
- provision of adequate transport for lecturers to visit students in practising schools
- improvement of the attitude of lecturers as well as that of students (this was a call for addressing human relations and interactive problems between lecturers and students)
- re-organisation of the programmes and timetable in order to have more time for assessment.

Not all of the problems mentioned above can be solved but an awareness of their existence can have a positive influence on course developers and lecturers involved and this is likely to result in a sensitivity amongst lecturers to the problematic aspects of assessment. It is also worth pointing out that the **qualitative data** in the survey was very forthright, candid and very informative as well as positive. This makes it crucial that it be treated seriously in the curriculum formulation and development.

The discussion of the teaching practice assessment content within the teaching practice curriculum has revealed that the following aspects need to be incorporated into the content coverage on teaching practice assessment :

- A clear articulation of the **objectives** of assessment
- Identification of assessment **criteria**
- Discussion and incorporation of a variety of assessment approaches such as:
  - the competency based approach
  - the clinical approach
  - the reflective approach
  - the mentoring approach.

The aim here should be the harnessing and utilization of the **strengths** embedded in these various approaches, as well as the provision of different **perspectives** of assessment:

- Profiling as an assessment tool
- Formative and summative assessment as processes of enhancing the students' development of teaching skills
- Development and use of assessment instruments, schedules and profiles
- An integrated system of assessment that blends formative and summative assessment as well as internal and external assessment.

*x)* *Timing and scheduling of the teaching practice curriculum*

In this section the last major element within the teaching practice curriculum that had earlier been intentionally avoided is discussed. This is the **timing** and **scheduling** of the proposed teaching practice curriculum. The concept of **timing** has two main aspects to it. First there is the total time to be spent on the curriculum: the answer to the question - *How long is the course ?* and within this broad and overarching perspective is the question- *What time is to be spent on each section of the curriculum ?* The second aspect to the concept of timing addresses the question: *When* ? The focus here is on when a particular section of the curriculum is to be tackled. This is closely linked to the scheduling of the sections of the curriculum and the elements within sections to achieve a logical sequence of coverage and a cohesive and meaningful learning experience.

In paragraph 3.4.2.2 the **content** of the teaching practice curriculum was analysed and within that discussion its **sequence**, **phases** and **timing** were explored. It was pointed out that sequencing the teaching practice curriculum serves **two** important purposes; first, it avoids the much criticized **immediate** and **total** immersion into full time teaching which overwhelms student teachers and second, it makes it possible to

build into the curriculum a **logical** development in the **introduction** and **practising** of the skills.

The teaching practice curriculum is a major aspect of the overall teacher education programme and its **duration** or **length** is usually determined by the overall duration of the teacher education programme. The common practice has been that teacher education programmes that are for **post graduate** students are **a year** long and those for non-graduate students being trained in teachers' colleges are usually **three** years. There are situations where graduate students study for teaching degrees that incorporate teacher education or where teacher education is studied concurrently with the academic subjects for a degree with education such as BA(Ed) or BSc(Ed). In the non-graduate sphere of teacher education there are situations where the duration of the course is two, three or four years. The Zimbabwean experience is a case in point where four types of teacher education programmes exist. These are: the post graduate Certificate in Education which is one year long, the three year non-graduate teacher education course for post 'O' level students, the two year non-graduate teacher education course for post 'A' level students and the four year post 'O' level distance education teachers' course popularly known as ZINTEC - the Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course.

In England and Wales students train to be teachers through one of two possible routes, the Bachelor of Education (B Ed) or the post-graduate Certificate of Education (P G C E) and both routes take four years. The B Ed is most commonly studied for in a single institution while for the P G C E, students first study for a three year first degree in a particular discipline then move on to another institution for the post-graduate teacher education course which is a year long. (Graves 1990: 26)

In South Africa the length of teaching practice in schools is measured in **days**. The 1990 Department of Education and Training (DET) syllabus for Teaching Practice states that during the course years of study, a minimum of **fifty** school days will be allocated to the school practicum with the suggested distribution of days spent at the schools as follows:

- the *first* year of the course: 10 days
- the *second* year of the course: 20 days
- the *third* years of the course: 20 days (Duminy *et al* 1992: 131).

Where the length of teaching practice has been measured in **years** rather than **weeks** it has usually been in cases where students have been used to alleviate the shortage of teachers. This has been the case in Zimbabwe since soon after the attainment of independence in 1980. Similar approaches also prevailed in Lesotho, Tanzania and Kenya. (Chivore 1990: 85)

Now that the problem of the shortage of teachers has been resolved, it is very likely that the length of school practice in Zimbabwean teacher education will be reviewed and reduced from the current one year in the three year long course. It might however not be reduced in the two year post 'A' level course where it is one term of three months long. Just before independence in Zimbabwe, teaching practice in teachers' colleges was regulated by the Primary Teacher Education Syllabuses and Regulations document which stated:

> *"Within the **three** year course students are required to complete a minimum of **sixteen** weeks of teaching practice but the manner in which this is achieved is at the discretion of colleges. Thus colleges may experiment with such procedures as a **day per week** in the first year, **weekly** periods of practice and a fairly lengthy school-based practice in the third year. Alternately, colleges may spread the practices **evenly** during the three years"* (1978: 29).

The usual practice then tended to be a teaching practice structure that saw :

- three or four weeks of teaching practice in the first year
- four weeks in the second year
- eight weeks in the third year.

It is very likely that colleges will soon start experimenting with a variety of approaches within the stipulated guidelines agreed with the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Zimbabwe.

**Scheduling** is used here to refer to the **arrangement** and **sequencing** of the **content** of the teaching practice curriculum in such a way that it is comprehensible to the students and thus easy to learn. A number of factors need to be taken into account when the scheduling of the content of the teaching practice curriculum is done:

- **Sequencing** is the arrangement of the content in a sequential and thus logical manner taking such issues as *simple to complex, particular to general* and immediate to remote into consideration (Turney *et al* 1985: 267).

- **Correlation** where the content is organised or structured in such a way that those parts that go together are taught in close logical sequence with a deliberate reference to their linkage and relationship. Again, here **sequencing** comes in as the arrangement of the content is done so that learning one aspect of the content can facilitate the learning of another aspect.

- **Readiness**: in this context the learning principle of *readiness to learn* which is a pre-requisite to learning holds true in the scheduling of the teaching practice content. Those initial **concerns** and **needs** of students usually caused by a **fear** or **anxiety** of embarrassing oneself in front of pupils and co-operating teachers and fellow students have to be tackled first or early. So are those basic skills that make the student settle into his **new role** of a teacher and **social environment** of the classroom. Turney *et al* (1985: 267) describe readiness as professional maturity, pre-requisite theoretical knowledge and experimental background.

- **Difficulty**: This is where the content is arranged so that the **simple** and **basic** are tackled first, thus building the students confidence and readiness to tackle more difficult and complex aspects of the content.

Sequencing of the content of the teaching practice has tended to follow such approaches which are discussed in paragraph 3.4.2.2:

- engaging students in pre-student teaching experiences such as child study, observing teachers at work, helping pupils with learning tasks, peer teaching and micro-teaching (Turney *et al* 1985: 14).

- sequenced classroom practice examples of which are; moving from teaching of small groups of children to the entire class; moving from brief teaching periods to larger and sustained experiences; moving from simulation techniques to real life situations.

In the conclusion of this section on the discussion of **timing** and **scheduling** it is important to emphasize that other factors for example **when** practising schools are available, the **expertise** of lecturers and co-operating teachers, the availability of resources like transport, and video recorders, are likely to influence **when** a particular content area is covered. There is therefore a need of building into the teaching practice curriculum an element of **flexibility** leaving latitude for creativity and inventiveness in the lecturers who implement it.

## 5.4 THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENT

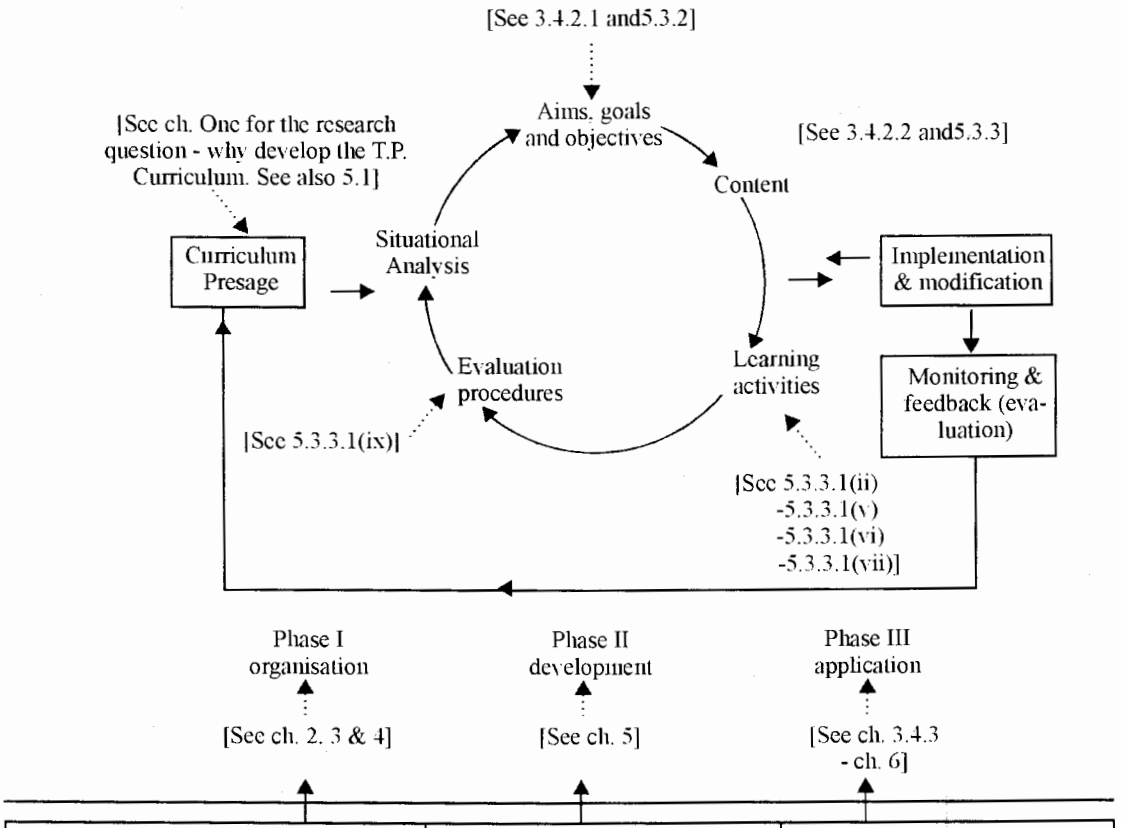
### 5.4.1 Introduction

Now that **all aspects** and **elements** of the teaching practice curriculum proposed in this study have been **identified** and discussed, the **condensed** curriculum document is presented. For clarity of presentation and understanding this is done through schematic representation with brief explanatory comments as well as cross referencing to sections within the thesis where a comprehensive discussion of the theme or element would have been done. The approach adopted is not prescriptive, hence in some parts of the proposed curriculum examples of elements

contents will be given, allowing those who adopt the curriculum the latitude to fit in and include what is suitable and relevant to their particular situation.

**FIGURE 5.5**

**A SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF HOW THE VARIOUS SECTIONS, THEMES AND ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSED TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM FIT INTO THE CYCLIC MODEL ADOPTED FOR ITS DEVELOPMENT**




| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ch. 2 - The discussion and adoption of a conceptual framework for the Teaching Practice Curriculum being developed.<br><br>Ch. 3 - A detailed and focussed discussion of the conceptualisation of the teaching practice curriculum.<br><br>Ch. 4 - A discussion of the current Teaching practice situation in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. | Ch. 5 - The development of a teaching practice curriculum for Teachers' Colleges in Zimbabwe. | Ch. 6 - Recommendations for the application of the proposed Teaching Practice Curriculum. |

Figure 5.5 shows how the whole study was carried out within the **conceptual framework** of the **cyclic model** of curriculum development which as stated in 2.6 had to be **eclectic**, bringing together the strengths of the main models of curriculum development.

Figure 5.5 reveals that the major features of the study were anchored on the cyclical model as follows:

- First, the **Curriculum Presage** which refers to those **activities** and **forces** that influence curriculum developers in their **decision making** tasks (see par. 2.6.1). In the context of this study the **fundamental research question** and its elaboration within the sub-questions form the curriculum presage. The basic question (see 1.2.2) is *What would be an ideal teaching practice curriculum for Zimbabwean Colleges of Teacher Education?* The sub-questions which logically emerge from this fundamental question are:

  - *What would be the aims and objectives of this curriculum ?*
  - *What would be the structure of the curriculum ?*
  - *What would be the theoretical and practical content of the curriculum ?*
  - *What would be the assessment and evaluation procedures of the curriculum ?*

- Then comes **phase I** of the cyclical model of curriculum development which is termed **Organisation**. Within the context of this study organisation has been done at a theoretical and **conceptual** level, as well as **structurally**. All this was done in chapters two, three and four, where in chapter two the focus was on the **conceptual framework** of the proposed teaching practice curriculum, then in chapter three, the focus shifted to the **conceptualisation** of the teaching practice curriculum and in chapter four the current teaching practice situation in Zimbabwe was discussed.

- All this **organisation** formed the foundation for **phase II** of the cyclical model which is **development.** In the development stage of the cyclical model, that is where the cyclical nature of the model is actualised through the stage of **situational analysis** that leads to the formulation of the **aims** and **objectives** which in turn determines the **content** to be included as well as the effective **learning activities** to use in order to

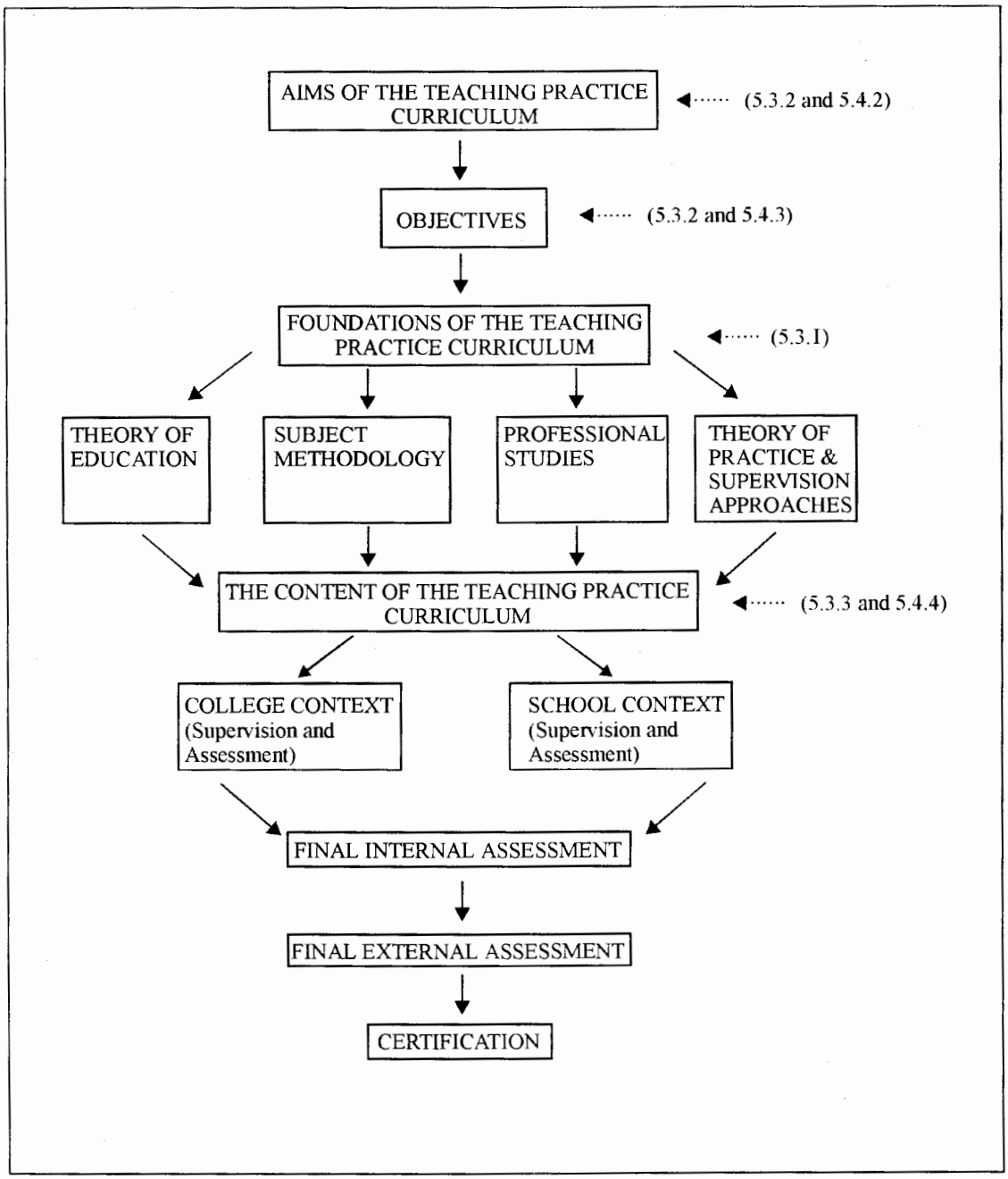
facilitate the students' acquisition of the skills, roles and attitudes of an effective teacher. Finally in the cycle is the evaluation which leads back to a reassessment of the **situation** and a reformulation or modification of some of the **aims** and objectives and the cycle is pursued once more. Chapter five of the study is where the **development** of the proposed teaching practice curriculum is done, the foundation of some of the stages in this development having been laid in chapter three.

- The last phase in the cyclical model is **application** which involves the **implementation** of the curriculum and monitoring the results which feed back to the **presage** and the cycle starts all over again. It was pointed out in 2.6.3 that within the context of this study, the application phase would be modified to encompass **recommendations** for implementation.

## FIGURE 5.6

## A SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Figure 5.6 is a schematic representation of the proposed teaching practice curriculum outline showing how the four major **anchors** of the curriculum which are **aims, objectives, foundations** and **content** logically relate and grow out of each other.



## 5.4.2 Aims of the teaching practice curriculum

The aims of teaching practice in the teaching practice curriculum being proposed could include the following, bearing in mind that there are **universal** aims as well as **country, state** or **nation** specific aims because of political philosophical and cultural factors peculiar to a particular country, state or nation.

5.4.2.1 To **introduce** students gradually to the **roles, tasks** and **skills** of a teacher and to give them opportunities **to practice** these roles, tasks and skills.

**Comment** *(Refer to par. 3.4.2.2 and 5.3.3.1(iii) for a discussion of roles and tasks of teaching and 3.4.1.4 and 5.3.3.1(iv) for a discussion of teaching skills). A theoretical examination and study of roles tasks and skills should precede their practice or be done simultaneously or concurrently with it.*

5.4.2.2 To provide students with opportunities **to learn about children** and **how they learn** so that they can develop their skills of **facilitating children or pupil learning**.

**Comment** *The theoretical study of children, their physical, mental, emotional and social development as well as how they learn would have been done in professional or educational foundations, most specifically in psychology of education (see par. 2.4 and 5.3.1.1).*

5.4.2.3 To provide students with opportunities to **integrate** the **educational theory** they are studying with **school practice** and in so doing **develop their own theory of practice**.

**Comment** *The accomplishment of this aim has to take into account the long standing criticism of the failure by teacher education programmes to forge a meaningful link that integrates theory and practice of education. For a discussion of this and suggestions on how it can be effectively done refer to par. 3.2 and 5.3.3.1(i).*

5.4.2.4 To help students develop a **reflective** and **critical** inquiry into the practice of teaching in order that they eventually become teaching professionals who as Putnam and Grant (Valli 1992: 82) rightly state, are life-long learners engaged in ongoing intellectual and scholarly curiosity about the practice of teaching and learning.

**Comment** *A discussion of how this aim on developing reflective and critical teachers can be achieved is found in par. 3.3 and 5.3.3.1(viii) (b). In an ever-changing world spurred on by technological advances, an effective teacher needs to develop as McCaleb, Borko and Arends (Valli 1992: 41) put it,* ***skills and dispositions for reflection, problem solving and decision-making.***

## 5.4.3 Objectives of the teaching practice curriculum

The **objectives** of the proposed teaching practice curriculum are logically derived from and further illuminate the broad aims just given. The objectives are also more directed to specific aspects of the teaching practice curriculum **content**. Therefore when it comes to outlining each curriculum content, the objectives to be achieved by **teaching** and giving students **practice** of the content will **precede** the content outline. **Some** objectives that derive from the aims just identified, follow. It is important to emphasize here that these objectives are not **the** objectives but **examples** since the approach being pursued is not **prescriptive** but **suggestive**.

### *5.4.3.1 Some Objectives deriving from Aim 5.4.2.1*

The following are some objectives on the introduction of students to the roles, tasks and skills of a teacher:

- Students will study the **role theory** in general and **teacher roles** in particular.
- Students will be helped to identify the **tasks** in each of the basic teacher roles.
- Students will be given practice in the carrying out of the basic roles of a teacher within the classroom, school and community domains.
- Students will study the theory of skill acquisition and development.

- Students will be helped to identify and conceptualise teaching skills.
- Students will be given practice in the performance of teaching skills in a developmental manner starting with basic or base line skills and moving on to more sophisticated and more demanding skills or performance of the same skills at a higher and more sophisticated level.

### *5.4.3.2 Some objectives deriving from Aim 5.4.2.2*

The second aim which is suggested focuses on the study and application of knowledge about the pupils the student will teach and how they learn. This is done in order to develop skills to effectively teach the pupils. The following are some of the objectives pertaining to this aim:

- Students, through observation and directed study of children find out how they grow and develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.
- Through observation and guided action - research students are to find out how pupils learn, how they can be motivated to learn as well as facilitated to learn.
- Students, through study and practice, develop effective ways of stimulating and fostering children's interests and organising children's learning experiences.

### *5.4.3.3 Some objectives emanating from Aim 5.4.2.3*

The following are some of the objectives on the aim of integration of educational theory and practice:

- Students are to be given opportunities to **observe** children, teachers, classrooms and schools as a background framework and context for theoretical studies at college.
- Students are to be guided to put into practice concepts, theories and skills they are learning and developing in college and in the process develop their own theory of practice through the processes of reflection about their practice as well as reflection in practice.
- To engage students in practical experiences that are structured to provide opportunities for knowledge integration and reflection about practice.

- To involve students in the study of theory of learning and teaching that integrates actual investigation of research data and guided practical work in schools.

#### *5.4.3.4 Some objectives emanating from Aim 5.4.2.4*

The following are examples of objectives on the aim of developing reflection and critical inquiry into teaching and learning by students:

- Students are to study and research on reflection and reflective teaching and by so doing be assisted to develop their own reflective approach to teaching. This is to be achieved by teaching students to view reflection as a **problem-solving process** operationalized as taking **action, reflecting** i.e. thinking about it as it occurs (reflection in action) or thinking back (evaluating or analysing) and reaching a **resolution** and if resolution is not reached moving on to a **higher level** of **reflective** or **critical** thought involving multiple causes, conflicting goals and larger moral and ethical conflicts and coming up with **alternative actions** and this continuing the cycle (Caleb, Borko and Arends in Valli 1992: 51).

- To engage students in reflection on their teaching through guided assignments, writing of teaching diaries and journals.

### 5.4.4 The content of the teaching practice curriculum

The **content** of the teaching practice curriculum has been **extensively** discussed (see par. 3.4.2.2 and 5.3.3). What is done here is to present this content in a **condensed** and in cases tabulated manner for easy reference. The **sequence** of the content coverage will be reflected in this presentation and **comments** will be made to indicate the **timing** of the content coverage as well as the **context**.

#### *5.4.4.1 Content coverage within the first year of the teacher education course*

In both the three year, post 'O' level and two year post 'A' level teacher education courses in Zimbabwe, the first year is spent on foundation education courses, professional studies and a study of main subjects or the subjects students are specialising to teach. The proposed content coverage aims at a **parallel** and **integrated** approach of introducing the student to the study of

teaching and pupil learning involving theoretical and practical work as vehicles for students' learning how to teach.

- **Content to be covered in the early stages of the first year (first term)**

  The content of the teaching practice curriculum in the introductory stages of the courses is already stated (see par. 5.3.1) in **professional foundations, professional studies** or **applied education** and the teaching practice department. The approach to teaching this proposed content is integrated through **joint planning** by the teams of lecturers teaching in the three areas of professional foundations, professional studies and teaching practice. The following are typical topics or themes that form the introductory lectures, studies and practical activities in the teacher education course.

- In **Professional Foundations** the **topics** or **themes** include :

  - **Psychological themes**

    - Human development i.e. physical, mental, emotional, moral and social *(focus will be on those stages relevant to the stage at which students will teach e.g. conception to early puberty for infant and junior primary school and puberty and adolescence for secondary school student teachers)*
    - Learning and learning theories
    - Motivation and motivation theory.

  - **Sociological Themes** include

    - Society and social institutions
    - The family and education
    - The school and society
    - The roles of the teacher.

  - **Philosophical Themes**

    - Education
    - Freedom and Authority
    - Discipline.

- In **Professional Studies** or **Applied Education** the themes include :

  - An introduction to teaching
  - Teaching methods
  - Teaching styles
  - Teaching documentation - syllabuses, schemes and lesson plans.

- In the **Teaching Practice Department** the themes **should** include :

  - A study of observation theory - what it is, its purpose and value.

  - Observation techniques - what they are, how to use them, including methods of recording information being observed (the tendency so far has been a neglect of this area of preparation in students).

- **Comment**

In a joint planning meeting as indicated earlier, the approach or strategy of integrating this content of teaching practice extricated from the three disciplines would be worked out. Suggested approaches are :

  - Introductory lectures in the three areas where the focus should be to prepare students for their initial guided observation sessions in the school focusing on the school as a whole, what goes on in the classroom especially child behaviour, child study, observation of learning activities and teaching (see Fig. 5.25 for an example of a module on this type of observation exercise).

  - What has been gathered through the observation is then used as a framework or basis of studying various theoretical content areas which in turn leads to further observation sessions in the schools.

  - The result of this approach is a teaching approach which has at least **four days** a week on the teaching and study of theoretical content and at least one day a week spent in schools on guided observation.

  - This teaching approach would be followed during the **first term** of the **first year** and it can, where necessary, spill over to second term.

- **Content to be covered during the second term of the first year**

  During the second term of the first year of training the content coverage in **all** disciplines of the teacher education course becomes more detailed and elaborate. The student is now familiar with the study approaches in each discipline and has done a lot of reading and research in the disciplines. The content coverage of the teaching practice curriculum during this phase (second term) of the first year should include the following:

  - A theoretical study of teaching skills.
  - Observation of teaching skills of experienced teachers.
  - Practice of teaching skills through peer teaching.
  - Practice of teaching skills through micro-teaching.
  - An introduction of students to various approaches to the observation of teaching such as:
    - the technical approach
    - the artistic approach
    - the clinical approach
    - the reflective approach

      *which can stand on its own or be integrated with all the other approaches*

- **Content to be covered during the third term of the first year**

  Activities started during the second term can be continued during the first part of the third term but the main focus suggested for the last term of the first year is on introducing the students gradually to actual teaching of children. The suggested approach is :

  - helping the class teacher with group work, supervising pupils, tasks and marking.
  - planning for and teaching small groups of pupils.
  - planning for and teaching large groups of pupils.
  - planning for and teaching the whole class.

Students can spend one day in schools doing this type of practice. Follow-up activities would be discussion of the teaching experiences where the student who would have done the teaching would reflect on his/her performance and fellow students in his group who would have observed the lesson would also analyse what they saw using the observation and analytic techniques that they would have been taught during the **first** and **second** term of first year. Students would have

continued studying related theory of practice in other disciplines, e.g. motivation, learning problems and disorders, the gifted child and the slow learner in psychology of education; the role of the family and community in the education of children, deviant behaviour, delinquency and peer groups in sociology and class management, marking and assessment of pupils' work as well as learning and teaching media in professional studies. These studies should be parallel to and in some instances integrated with what is being covered in the teaching practice curriculum. Thereby, they greatly enhance the overall development of the student teacher in readiness for the fully fledged extended teaching practice which is a **year** long in the three year course, and a **term** long in the two year course.

### *5.4.4.2 Content coverage in the second year of teacher education*

It is during the second year of the course that the students embark on the fully fledged teaching practice in practising schools under the **daily** supervision of the class teacher and rather **limited** supervision of the college supervisor.

The content of the teaching practice curriculum during the second year is focused on the students' practice and development of :

- the basic and essential teaching skills
- his/her own teaching style
- the students' knowledge of how children learn
- the school curriculum.

The approach suggested for tackling the content of the teaching practice curriculum in the second year of fully fledged and sustained teaching practice is as follows :

■ **TERM ONE**

The focus should be on the practice and refinement of basic teaching skills which include:

- **Skill in drawing up schemes**
  which involves using the given syllabus to select topics and content relevant to the syllabus coverage and sequentially organise it within well formulated aims.

- **Skill in using language or communication**
  which covers giving instructions, explaining, narration and basic questioning.

- **Management skills**
  which include organising children and materials in readiness for teaching, organising children into groups for learning activities and the use of learning and teaching aids.

- **Skill in lesson planning**
  which involves the ability to formulate behavioural and appropriate objectives, preparing appropriate introductory activities as well as learning steps and sequences to actively involve the pupils in meaningful learning, and working out an appropriate conclusion to the lesson.

- **Skill in lesson presentation and management**
  which involves successfully engaging pupils in the learning experience and the management and organisation of the learning activities taking place during the lesson to maintain pupils' attention, interest and involvement.

The student should also be assisted to start maintaining the teaching practice records which in the Zimbabwean context include :

- schemes of work and their records
- lesson plans and evaluations
- mark schedules
- pupil progress records
- remedial records.

It is the contention of the researcher that if Zimbabwean student teachers are to develop into reflective teachers they should in addition to the records they currently maintain at least keep a **journal**. It is suggested that the journal should be a weekly journal that focuses on the lessons

taught during the week. These lessons will have been planned, taught and evaluated. The journal entry can identify **critical** events in the way the lessons were taught, be they **strengths** or **weaknesses**, **teaching methods** and **pupil activities**. Guideline **reflective analysis questions** can be used so that the students focus their reflection on critical aspects of their teaching. Examples of reflective analysis questions are :

- *What were the essential strengths of the lessons you taught this week ?*
- *What problems did you encounter in your teaching this week ?*
- *Which teaching approaches/methods did you find effective this week ? Why do you say so ?*
- *How did your interaction with the pupils during the week affect your teaching, class control and the general climate in the classroom ?*
- *What new ideas, methods and approaches do you intend to try out next week ?*
- *How did the class teacher assist you in your teaching this week ? What aspects of your teaching did you and the class teacher focus on and what was the outcome ?*

It has been said that **experience is not** the best teacher, **reflection** and **analysis** are essential (McCaleb, Borko & Arends 1992: 52),(own emphasis). The weekly journaling, if maintained throughout the year, will encourage reflection upon experience. It can be a vehicle of promoting disciplined reflection on a regular basis. In the survey the researcher carried out (see par. 4.5) students did criticize the number of records they are required to keep to the extent that they ended up seeing themselves as clerks rather than student teachers. It is the contention of the researcher that students will complain about the amount of records they have to maintain as long as they do not see the **value** or **purpose** served by these records.

Another major activity which the researcher suggests be made part of the teaching practice curriculum in the second year is **seminar work**. There is need for students in a school to meet regularly at least for an hour to *discuss, share* and *reflect* on the practice they are engaged in. It is suggested that the seminars could take the following format :

- Students in a school could meet every fortnight or once a month with or without their co-operating teachers to share their experiences and help each other with problems some might be encountering.

- Students, their co-operating teachers and college supervisors could meet once a term at the school and discuss the teaching practice in progress.

Issues to be discussed in these seminars need to be identified and planned for in advance. The college supervisor(s) responsible for monitoring the practice of students in a particular school could be the co-ordinator of these seminars.

The activities of the first term of the second year of teaching practice can be outlined as follows:

- Week one: student observes the class teacher and assists in supervising children's work and also in marking.

- Week two: student starts planning and teaching some of the lessons.

- Week three to end of term :

  - student takes over most of the lessons
  - class teacher supervises at least one or more lessons a week using the **reflective** and **clinical** approach to supervision
  - at least once a fortnight the class teacher/mentor assesses one or two of the student's lessons. This approach separates the supervision and assessment functions of the co-operating teacher
  - the student maintains the records stipulated by the college, as well as the **reflective journal** which he/she writes once a week
  - once a fortnight students hold an hour long seminar with or without their class teachers
  - once a term students, their co-operating teachers and college supervisors hold a seminar on the teaching practice in progress.

## ■ TERM TWO

In the second term of the year long teaching practice the concentration is still on the student classroom practice as well as other school duties that he or she is involved in. The major focus though is on his teaching. Whereas in the first term the focus was on assisting the student practise the **basic** baseline teaching skills, during the second term there is a shift in focus towards assisting the student to practise more sophisticated or higher order teaching skills and also to facilitate the student's development in sophistication, skill performance, insight and interpretation of what he or she is engaged in and what is going on around him. Bourdillon (1983: 14) described this higher level of a student's operation as he or she consciously strives to practise more complex teaching skills. He said that "students must be **encouraged** and **helped** to display a rich **variety** in many aspects of their work - they need suggestions as to how to use a variety of **sources** and **aids**, how to offer varied **activities**, how to provide varied **stimulation** and how to use more varied **approaches** (own emphasis). Reference to table 5.2 will reveal the more sophisticated and higher order skills that the student will practise during the second term of the year.

The supervision element becomes **more critical** at this stage because it is the supervisor who should work closely with the student using the clinical supervisory cycle of pre-lesson planning and discussion **with the student.** Clinical and technical observation and recording and post lesson conferencing assist the student to explore a repertoire of approaches, skill execution and evaluation and reflection of what he/she is doing and results he/she is achieving. It is here that the **skill** of the supervisor is very critical. Training of supervisors is therefore strongly advocated if students are to benefit from extended teaching practice.

All the activities identified for the first term continue into the second term. Therefore there is the student supervision by the class teacher at least once a week; supervision by the college supervisor at least once a month; maintenance of all teaching practice records by the student teacher including the reflective journal as well as the fortnightly seminars of students with or without their co-operating teachers and the termly seminar involving the students at the school, their co-operating teachers and college supervisors.

## ■ TERM THREE

The third term of the year long teaching practice is really for preparing for the final assessment or examination by the college and external examiners. Activities during the term can be identified as follows :

- First two or three or four weeks :
  Assessing those students who were weak or promising to achieve distinctions.
- Students prepare themselves for the visit of external assessors:
  Documentation is checked, teaching media and other forms of preparation are organised.
- The college meets to conclude the final internal assessment of students.
- External assessors/examiners visit a sample of the students on teaching practice.
- Joint meetings of internal and external assessors to finalise the teaching practice examination.

The coverage of the teaching practice curriculum during the second year which is a year long, just proposed is for the three year long post 'O' level teacher education course. The same approach described for the year long second year school practice is also proposed for the term long teaching practice for the post 'A' level two year course. The **sequence** is exactly the same. The difference is in the **timing**. Because the school practice in the two year post 'A' level teacher education course is concentrated into **one** term, the first term of the second year, the activities outlined for the year long practice are therefore condensed into the three months of the first term of the second year as follows :

- The following activities for the first term in the year long teaching practice are proposed (for the first **month** of the first term):

  - first week: student observation
  - second week to end of term: student teaches the majority of lessons
  - class teacher supervises at least **three** or **more** lessons a week using the **reflective** and **clinical approach** to supervision
  - class teacher **assesses** at least one lesson a week.

This approach will **separate** the **supervision** and **assessment** functions of the co-operating teacher and create an atmosphere conducive to the students trying out and experimenting with a variety of teaching methods and approaches.

- The student maintains the records stipulated by the college as well as the reflective journal which he writes once a week.

- Once a week students hold an hour long seminar with or without the co-operating teachers.

- Once a fortnight students, their co-operating teachers and college supervisors, hold a seminar.
- The first month of teaching practice focuses on baseline teaching skills.

- The second month of practice focuses on higher order and more sophisticated skills and the supervision becomes **intense** and more **regular**.

- The third month is the final teaching assessment or examination month when the following takes place :

    - The student does his final preparation in readiness for the final teaching practice examination.

    - The college assessors meet to arrive at the final internal assessment marks of the students.

    - The external assessors/examiners visit a **sample** of the students for external assessment/examination.

    - The college internal assessors (academic board) and the external assessors meet to arrive at the final teaching practice mark for each student.

For the **content** of the proposed teaching practice curriculum to be effectively taught during school practice, it is very important that the following be taken into account :

- The school supervisors/mentors should be well trained for their tasks. Their training should be in the modern approaches to supervision which are clinical supervision, mentoring and reflective supervision (see 5.3.3.1.9 for a discussion of these approaches).

- The college supervisors should also be trained in the modern approaches to supervision (see 5.3.3.1.9 for a discussion of these approaches).

- Time should be created and suitable numbers of college supervisors assigned to each school or cluster of schools for supervision purposes.

- The seminars which have been programmed should be planned for and held and the deliberations of those seminars should focus on what students need assistance in and ways of improving the conditions students practice in.

- There has to be **joint** planning and **constant** or **regular** interaction and consultation between the college and school supervisors.

- There has to be a deliberate move to separate supervision and assessment to give students latitude to experiment and try out a variety of teaching methods and approaches without fear of being marked down.

## 5.5 RESUMÉ

In chapter five the proposed teaching practice curriculum that had been discussed and developed in earlier chapters finally crystallized, through the presentation of the major elements of the curriculum which are: the aims, objectives, content and how it can be taught.

Since all these major elements had already been discussed in detail in earlier chapters, the detail of what needs to be covered when tackling the proposed teaching practice curriculum was identified through cross referencing to the chapters where these aspects were discussed. The

approach adopted for the presentation of the proposed curriculum is **suggestive** and thus **flexible**, offering ideas how the teaching practice content could be taught but leaving the final decision of choice of approach to the implementer of the curriculum. The objective in adopting this approach, which is not **prescriptive**, is to allow for those colleges who would want to adopt the approach being suggested to use the suggestions to draw up a curriculum document or course programme suited to their particular individual situation.

# CHAPTER SIX

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 SUMMARY

This study aimed at the development of a teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. The study is a sequel to an earlier study by the researcher where a critical analysis of the teaching practice model in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe was carried out (Ndlovu: 1993). It became apparent during the earlier study that if teaching practice in teachers' colleges was to be improved, the most effective way to achieve this would be through the development of a teaching practice curriculum (Ndlovu 1993: 232). In order to develop this teaching practice curriculum which is proposed for adoption by teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe, a **conceptual framework** for curriculum development was developed based on research in the field of curriculum theory and practice (consult chapter two). This was done to give the **theoretical context** in which the proposed curriculum is embedded. This **cognitive framework,** it is assumed, makes it possible for one to be aware of curriculum issues that need to be addressed in order to achieve the aim of the study. The emphasis then shifted from the broader theoretical framework of curriculum issues and concerns to focus on the **conceptualization** of the teaching practice curriculum (see chapter three). This was done in order to explore the philosophical, socio-political and theoretical issues that come into play in the development of a teaching practice curriculum. The next stage was an exposition of the current teaching practice situation in Zimbabwean Teachers' Colleges (see chapter 4). In the examination of the current situation, the views of lecturers and students gathered through a survey were analysed. The exploration and analysis of the current teaching practice situation logically prepared the ground for the development of the proposed teaching practice curriculum (see chapter5).

### 6.1.1 Background to the problem

The fundamental problem which was addressed in this study is embedded in the need to improve the **quality** of education in Zimbabwe through the improvement of teacher education. The research focused on the development of a teaching practice curriculum as a means of enhancing the **practical education** of student teachers in Zimbabwe. This was done first, because the researcher had found that the *preparations for* and *implementation* of the **practice** of education in Zimbabwe had inherent flaws (see par. 1.2.2). Secondly the development of a teaching practice curriculum for Zimbabwean teachers' colleges made it possible to conduct research into *current* trends in the practice of education such as reflective practice, mentoring and partnership ( see par. 3.3.4 and par. 5.3.3) and to incorporate them into teacher education in Zimbabwe.

### 6.1.2 The problem

The prevailing approach to teaching practice in Zimbabwe's colleges of teacher education impedes qualitative development in the practice of education. While teaching practice is a major component of the overall teacher education curriculum, treating it as an activity rather than a subject with a fully developed and articulated curriculum has hindered the development of the practice of education within teacher education in Zimbabwe. This study focused on the development of a teaching practice curriculum in order to improve the students preparation for and practice of teaching so as to enhance the quality of teacher education.

### 6.1.3 The investigation

In the first chapter an introductory orientation to the problem of developing a teaching practice curriculum for teacher education in Zimbabwe was explored. In the second chapter a conceptual framework for curriculum development was built. The third chapter provided an analysis of the teaching practice curriculum focusing on the place of teaching practice in teacher education and the theoretical contexts of the teaching practice curriculum. The fourth chapter comprised an examination of the prevailing teaching practice situation in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. In

the fifth chapter the proposed teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe was developed on the basis of the knowledge gained in the previous chapters.

## 6.2 CONCLUSIONS

### 6.2.1 A need to review the teacher education curriculum

In the process of developing a teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe, it became apparent that the whole teacher education curriculum needs to be reviewed, especially now that the critical teacher shortage has been resolved (see par. 4.1). This review would make it possible for teacher educators to **evaluate** the courses being taught as well as the approaches being used to teach them. Time is now opportune for teacher educators in Zimbabwe to develop teacher education through research into the field rather than to react to political and government intervention, (see par. 1.1.1 and par. 4.2.1) by research directed at justification of changes being implemented (see par. 1.1.1).

### 6.2.2 The consequences of developing the teaching practice curriculum

The development of the teaching practice curriculum just completed has resulted in the following:

- **Possibilities on how the theory and practice in teacher education can be integrated** (see par. 1.1 and par. 3.2.1)

  It is the observation of the researcher that in Zimbabwe, when one examines the theory-practice relationship, the theory component of the teacher education course is more developed and in most cases better taught than the practical component. There are still traces of the approach to teacher education that concentrates on theory in college as preparation for school practice then placing students in schools for that practice. There is need for a deliberate re-examination of how the theoretical and

practical components of teacher education can be effectively integrated. Tentative starts in this direction have been made through two relatively new developments in the teacher education curriculum in Zimbabwe. The first is the development of **professional studies**, especially in primary teachers' colleges, and the introduction of the study of communication skills in secondary teachers' colleges. An adoption of the teaching practice curriculum that has been developed in this study could give impetus to this focus on integration of the theoretical and practical aspects of teacher education.

- **Possibilities of improving the college-school relationship**

  The current world trends in college-school relationships as conceptualised in **partnership** open up new ground for teacher educators to work on how best to build a positive relationship with schools and tap the professional knowledge, expertise and experience of teachers in the training of student teachers. That colleges have to *meaningfully* involve teachers in teacher education is undisputed, it is how this can be accomplished that is problematic.

The major challenge now facing teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe is the building of a **partnership** with schools in the education and training of students. This is seen as a major challenge because schools no longer need student teachers tobe fully responsible for classes now that the teacher shortage is over, yet the colleges need the schools for teaching practice as well as other practical activities that require students to interact with teachers and pupils or to observe what goes on in schools. Colleges have to **meaningfully** involve teachers in teacher education and the first link is, as has been in the past, through teaching practice. It is necessary that the type of partnership that colleges forge with schools be that of **equals**. Crozier *et al* (1990: 44) rightly state that while there has always been a form of partnership between colleges and schools, it has tended to be one-sided. They point out that if this partnership is to benefit both parties, there should be **equality of power** with the two partners sharing **decision making, benefits** and **responsibility**. This study has explored possibilities on how this could be done (see par. 5.3.3.1 [viii]).

In Zimbabwe teachers involved in the supervision of students are not prepared well for this function and there is a general observation by colleges that the assessment of the school teachers does not reveal the true performance of the student. As a result teachers' grades are not used to determine the quality of performance of students. Instead they are used as evidence that the student was supervised by the school. In the survey the researcher carried out (see par. 4.9), in giving suggestions for the improvement of teaching practice, students emphasised the headmaster's role in such statements :

- *Headmasters' assessment should be taken into account as they are the ones who spend more time with students.*
- *Lecturers should seek information about the behaviour and effectiveness of a student from the school authorities.*
- *Headmasters should be taught/encouraged to help students through development programmes.*

At the time the survey was carried out students were used as fulltime teachers and the school supervisor was mainly the headmaster assisted by the deputy and senior teachers. In the current approach where students are now practising under the supervision of a class teacher, the suggestions given by the students for the improvement of their supervision and assessment in schools are still relevant.

Lack of orientation and preparation of schools for their teaching practice role was mentioned in the Department of Teacher Education, Teaching Practice Co-ordination Report for term 1 1996, (Shumba D T E/6/96). According to Shumba (DTE/6/96: 2) some teachers with limited teaching proficiency and experience were assigned to mentor student teachers. He also stated; "In very few instances did assessors report high morale and/or motivation in the part of mentoring teachers or their awareness of college expectations" (Shumba DTE/6/96: 2).
There is therefore a need for colleges to involve schools in a professional dialogue to establish the context, approach and spirit of the partnership between the college and schools.

- **The conceptualisation of the theory of practice**

  The conceptualisation of the **theory of practice** is an essential component of teacher education in general and teaching practice in particular. This study made it possible to examine this important aspect of the teaching practice curriculum (see par. 3.2.1 and 3.3).

- **Reflective practice**

  This study has revealed the importance of studying the theory and practice of teacher reflection and because of this it has been incorporated into the teaching practice curriculum that has been developed (see par. 3.2.1.3 to 3.3.4.5 and par. 5.3.3.1).

## 6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made :

### 6.3.1 The adoption of the proposed teaching practice curriculum

The major recommendation is for the adoption of the teaching practice curriculum that has been developed in this study. Its adoption can take a number of forms. First, there could be the realisation and acceptance of the need to have a fully developed teaching practice curriculum in teachers' colleges. This in essence is fundamental and it was one of the researcher's major aims in carrying out this study; to indicate the need for a teaching practice curriculum and how it could improve the *quality* of teacher education in teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. Second, the adoption of the teaching practice curriculum that has been developed could take the form of adopting the *principles*, the *content* and *elements* suggested and using these as a point of departure in developing a teaching practice curriculum that is most suited to the particular conditions prevailing in a college. Third, the teaching practice curriculum that has been

developed can be adopted in its entirety, with minor modifications, again to suit specific conditions prevailing in a particular college.

The adoption of the teaching practice curriculum that has been developed has the following implications :

- *Development of expertise in the practice of education*

  An adoption of the proposed teaching practice curriculum would result in the development of expertise in the practice of education. Fulltime lecturers in the teaching practice department would be able to carry out research in the area as they prepare to teach the content of the curriculum. This would result in expertise developing in various aspects of the curriculum such as supervision, assessment, and micro-teaching.

- *Effective teaching of the content of the teaching practice curriculum*

  A well developed curriculum on teaching practice makes it possible that the content be effectively taught, provided of course that adequate lecturers with necessary expertise in the area are there.

- *Effective engagement of students in school practice*

  If the teaching practice curriculum is adopted, it makes it possible for students to be effectively engaged in school practice through a well co-ordinated programme of student placement in schools, their supervision and assessment by both the college based and school based supervisors. A positive partnership between colleges and schools would be pursued (see par. 5.3.3.1).

- *Integration of theory and practice*

The proposed teaching practice curriculum addresses the issue of the theory - practice integration, offering suggestions of how this could be achieved. (see chapter five par. 5.3 and 5.4)

- *Effective organisation of teaching practice*

The teaching practice curriculum when being implemented by a full staff complement would ensure an efficient and effective organisation of teaching practice.

- *Improvement in the supervision of students*

The teaching practice curriculum that has been developed ensures the proper preparation of college based and school based supervisors through the study of theory of supervision as well as various approaches to supervision (see par. 5.3.3.1.9). If this is done, it will enhance the quality of student teaching practice supervision. The curriculum also suggests how students can be prepared for their supervision (see par. 5.3.3.1.9 and 5.4.3). This also is necessary if students are to benefit and learn through their supervision by the college and school based supervisors. As Nettle (1988) stated: Supervision in teacher education is really a method of **helping** student teachers to learn about teaching. It should not be primarily a means of checking on **how much** or **how well** students teachers have learned about teaching (own emphasis).

- *Improvement in the assessment of students*

The teaching practice curriculum that has been developed ensures the enhancement of student assessment by requiring that the supervisors who are both college and school based, should study various approaches to assessment in preparation for their assessment role (see par. 5.3.3.1.10). It also requires that students be familiarized with assessment theory and approaches in preparation for their teaching practice assessment (see par. 5.3.3.1.10).

- *Preparation of school-based supervisors*

  In order to improve the quality of student supervision and assessment by the school-based supervisors, the teaching practice curriculum being proposed for adoption, has suggestions on how school-based supervisors can be prepared for their supervision and assessment roles (see par. 5.4.3.2).

The other recommendations, though able to exist independently, do however strengthen and enhance the effective implementation of the teaching practice curriculum that has been developed and is proposed for adoption.

### 6.3.2 The adequate staffing of teaching practice departments in teachers' colleges

In an earlier study (Ndlovu 1993: 194) it was pointed out that while teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe have teaching practice departments, the major weakness inherent in these departments is that they are inadequately staffed. The reason for this inadequate staffing was the perceived major functions of these teaching practice departments which are **organisational** and **administrative** rather than didactic (Ndlovu 1993: 194). For this reason only one or two members of the department are active and because they also perform lecturing duties, they are overworked. The implementation of the teaching practice curriculum that has been developed requires a full complement of staff because there is content that has to be taught (see par. 5.3.3 and 5.4.3). A full staff complement in the department will also ensure that interaction with schools through a mutually developed system of **partnership** is maintained.

### 6.3.3 The Development of a partnership between colleges and practising schools

In an earlier study (Ndlovu 1993: 207) it was established that the school-based supervisor was best placed to effectively supervise students on teaching practice, mainly because he/she was working with the student on a daily basis. The potential of the school-based supervisor in

effectively supervising the student teacher can only be realised through a well developed partnership between the college and practising school (see par. 5.3.3.1). It is recommended that the partnership between colleges and practising schools be **formalised** in the form of policy so that broad parameters may be worked out by the University's Department of Teacher Education, the Ministry of Higher Education and colleges. This formalisation of the partnership will ensure, among other things, that the teachers taking part in the partnership are given due **recognition**, **training** and even **remuneration**. The spirit and essence of partnership being envisaged is that of **co-operation of equals** (Wharfe and Burrows 1990: 31) where both the schools and colleges have important and valid contributions to offer in teacher education within the spheres of design, teaching, supervision and assessment of courses.

### 6.3.4 Staff development of teaching practice supervisors

It is recommended that both the college-based and school-based supervisors be trained. The training of teaching practice supervisors is critical if the quality of the supervision of students on teaching practice is to improve. The training can take a variety of forms ranging from short term training through seminars and workshops to long term training through formal college or university courses. The need for the training of supervisors is not something new but has been experienced over the years. According to Koerner (1992: 46) research on the kind of knowledge co-operating teachers need to perform their supervision role well has shown that it ranges from **expertise** in **supervision techniques** and **skill in observation** (Hauwiller, Abel, Ansel and Sparapam, 1989 - 1989) to **interpersonal communication** and **effectiveness** as a classroom teacher (Copas 1984). According to Koerner (1992: 49) the professional development that classroom teachers would like in compensation for becoming co-operating teachers includes **workshops** that are designed and planned to help prepare them for this new role.

In Zimbabwe, training of the school-based supervisors, would make it possible for their assessment to be taken into account when reviewing the student's progress. Currently this is not the case, and it therefore undermines the status and morale of the school-based supervisor (Ndlovu 1993: 244). The assessment of school-based supervisors has been found to be an **unreliable** indicator of the student's performance. (Siyakwazi 1987: 10 - 11) This observation

was also recently made by Shumba (DTE/6/96: 2) when he wrote the following about supervision by school-based supervisors :

> *"External assessors observed (1995) that some schools are way ahead compared to others in terms of the* ***amount*** *and* ***quality*** *of supervising student teachers (own emphasis). In terms of performance, some schools produced consistently low T.P. scores and, by contrast, some schools produced high scores. This observation suggests that T.P. departments must involve themselves in systematic analysis and appraisal of the quality of schools where they place their students.* ***Bad schools*** *can be eliminated or can be targets for* ***workshops*** *intended to improve the amount and quality of* ***assistance*** *they render student teachers. Where trends in low scores are observed for virtually all students, this is often an indication of* ***poor quality*** *in school support and guidance".*

Shumba's statement reveals the following :

- that it is recognised that school-based supervisors need training.
- It also reveals a negative attitude by the Department of Teacher Education and colleges towards schools with reference to their role in teacher education specifically in teaching practice. This negative attitude is reflected in reference to **bad** schools and **poor quality** in school support.
- Reflected in the statement is also the rather one-sided approach to the partnership concept where the University and colleges perceive themselves as knowing **all** that needs to be done in teacher education while the schools have not much to offer. This conception of partnership is negative and results in problems and tensions in the college - school relationships.

If schools are to contribute effectively in teacher education they ideally need to be involved in course design and be well briefed on how the colleges are preparing students for school practice and how they are expected to supervise and assess students. The prevailing situation in Zimbabwe where colleges are viewed as the **superior** partners has to be replaced by a recognition of the expertise of the teachers and a move towards **equality** in the partnership.

It has to be recognised that it is not only the school-based supervisors that need training but the college supervisors as well. It is very important that the college supervisors be well trained or prepared for their supervision role because they not only supervise the student but are the link between the school and college as well as the interpreters of the college requirements in the college supervisor, student and school supervisor triad.

## 6.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study focused on the development of a teaching practice curriculum for teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe. This resulted from the researcher's perceived need for such a curriculum in order to enhance the practical education of students through preparation for and engagement in teaching practice in schools. In order to achieve this, curriculum theory relevant to the study was examined and a curriculum development model adopted (see chapter 2). The teaching practice curriculum that was developed in chapter 5, resulted in the conclusions (see par. 6.2) and recommendations (see par. 6.3) ensuing from the main recommendation of the adoption of the teaching practice curriculum that was developed. The implementation of this teaching practice curriculum is bound to lead to further research and development of various aspects of teaching practice as well as related theoretical components of the overall teacher education curriculum.

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